宗像教授伝奇考

【第五集】

むなかたきょうじゅでんきこう

星野之宣

Hoshino Yukinobu

潮漫画文庫

宗像教授伝奇考

【第五集】

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黄泉の国で、変わり果てた妻イザナミから
逃げ出そうとするイザナギに何かを告げ、
誉められた菊理媛（くくりひめ）。そして組紐、屏風。
訪れた菊理村で宗像教授は、
この三つをまのあたりにする。
これらは現世と冥界をつなぐものなのか、
それとも……。教授の結論は？

〈菊理媛（くくりひめ）は何を告げたか〉より

❖星野之宣❖

一九五四年一月二十九日、北海道帯広市に生まれる。愛知県立芸大中退。
一九七五年「鋼鉄のクイーン」でデビューし、同年「はるかなる朝」で手塚賞受賞。
以来、宇宙、海洋、伝奇、ＳＦ等、スケールの大きい本格派ＳＦ漫画家として活躍。
徹底した取材と科学的知識に基づく、卓抜なアイディア、壮大で緻密なストーリー、
繊細なペンタッチが多くの読者をひきつけている。
代表作に、「妖女伝説」「２００１夜物語」「ヤマタイカ」「ブルーホール」
「未来の二つの顔」「メガクロス」「宗像教授伝奇考」など多数。

BOOK DESIGN❖TAKAHASHI JUNZI

既刊大好評発売中!!

❖星野之宣の本❖

◉希望コミックス
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◉潮漫画文庫
「ヤマタイカ」全5巻

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

VOLUME 5

HOSHINO YUKINOBU

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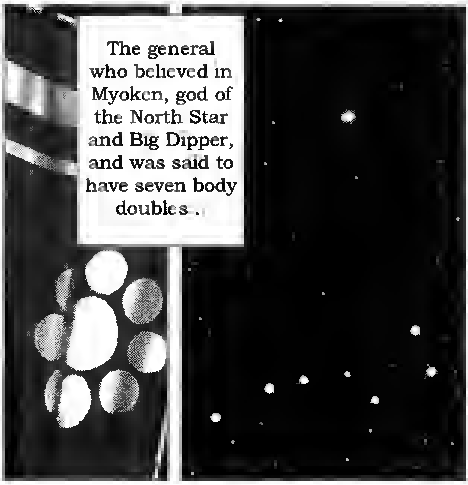
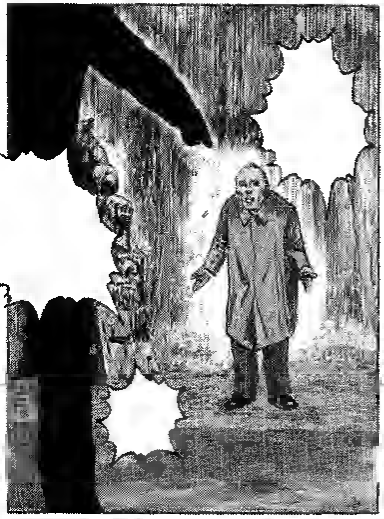
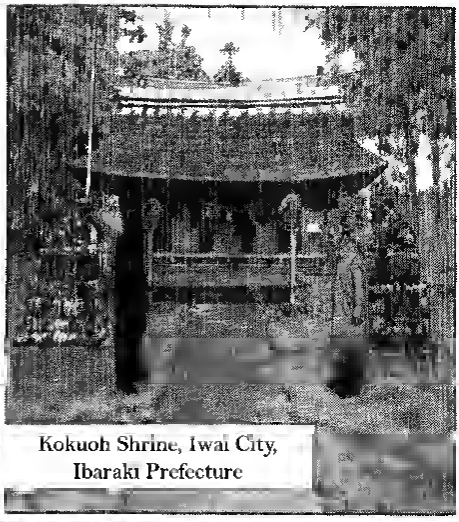
File 24:
Masakado's Journey to the West: Part 1

The man who, in the tenth century during the Heian period, named himself the "new Emperor" and openly challenged the Imperial Court
The hero of Kanto, Taira-no-Masakado ..

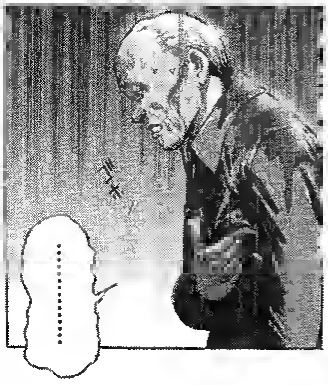

The general who believed in Myoken, god of the North Star and Big Dipper, and was said to have seven body doubles ..

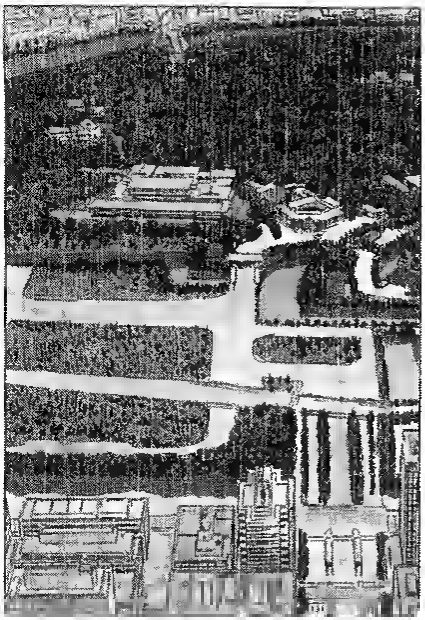
Though his military fortune had run out and his severed head was put on display in Kyoto, his name, the sound of which made the Heian nobles tremble, did not perish...
until he would rise again centuries later for another journey of battle...

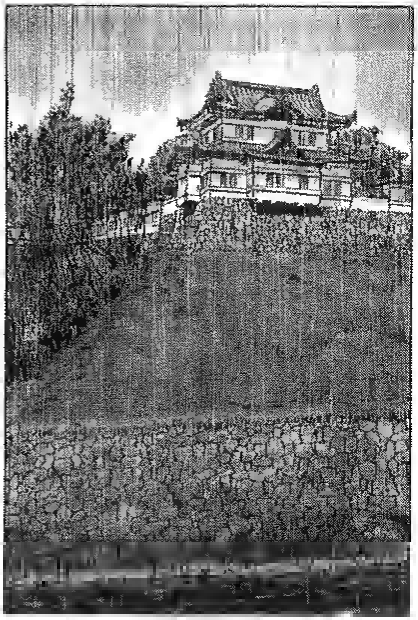




Kokuoh Shrine, Iwai City, Ibaraki Prefecture



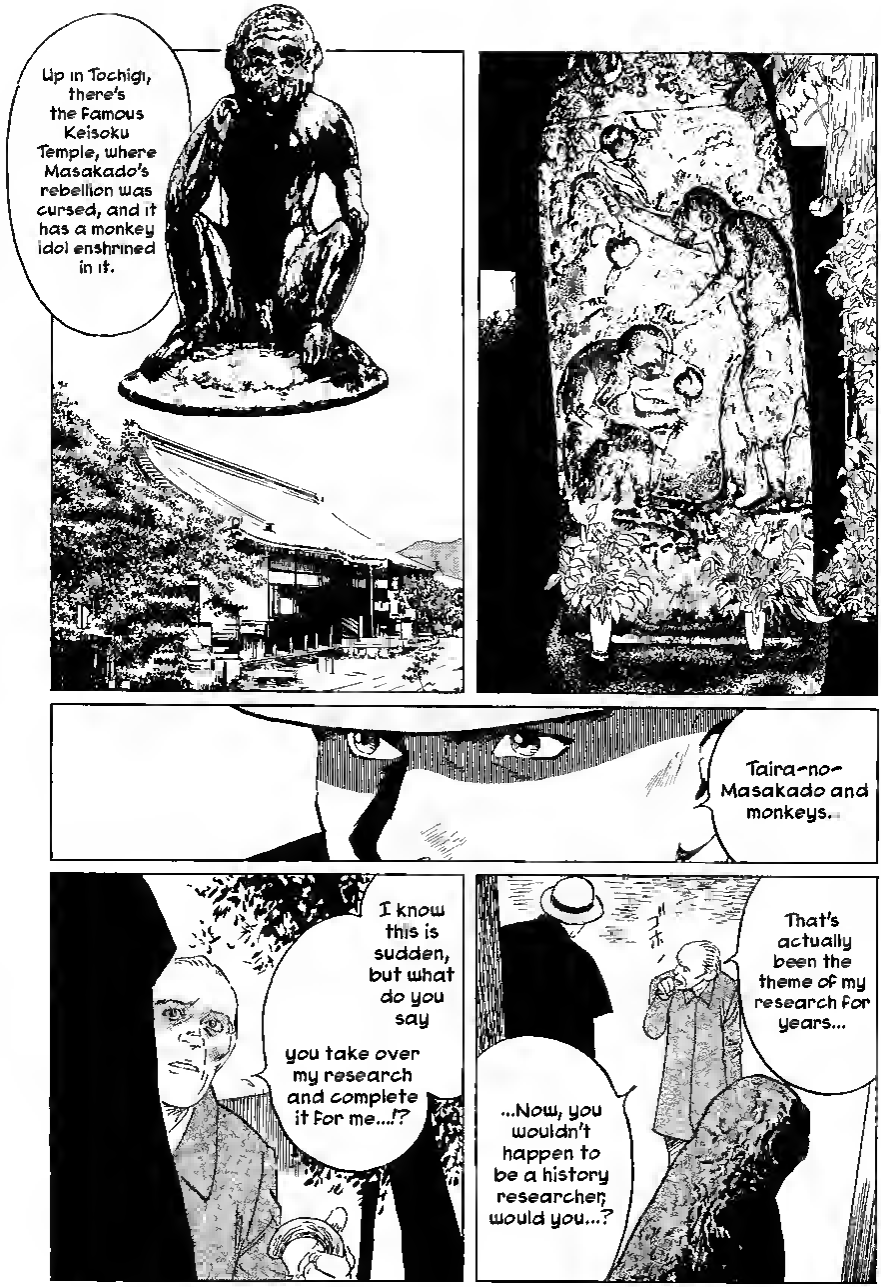




Yoroi Shrine,
Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo

I was seeking shelter from the rain and ducked into an alley, where I found this shrine standing still and deserted
This happened three years ago...
Isn't it odd that the guardian lion-dog is a monkey...?

Yoroi Shrine is said to be the burial place of Taira-no-Masakado's armor after his rebellion.
Tai-ra-no-Ma-sakado?
My name's Soma, and I run a small business in Toride, Ibaraki. I'm an amateur researcher of Masakado, though I guess you could call me a Fan instead.
.....
This explanation states that this is a guardian lion-dog-shaped Koshin pillar, but why would there be a Koshin pillar here...?
And there is also a Koshin pillar that depicts monkeys.
There's another shrine in Tokyo called Tsukudo Hachiman. And Tsukudo refers to "Tsukudo Myojin", which is said to represent Masakado...


Up in Tochigi, there's the famous Keisoku Temple, where Masakado's rebellion was cursed, and it has a monkey idol enshrined in it.
Taira-no-Masakado and monkeys...
I know this is sudden, but what do you say
you take over my research and complete it for me...!?
That's actually been the theme of my research for years...
...Now, you wouldn't happen to be a history researcher, would you...?

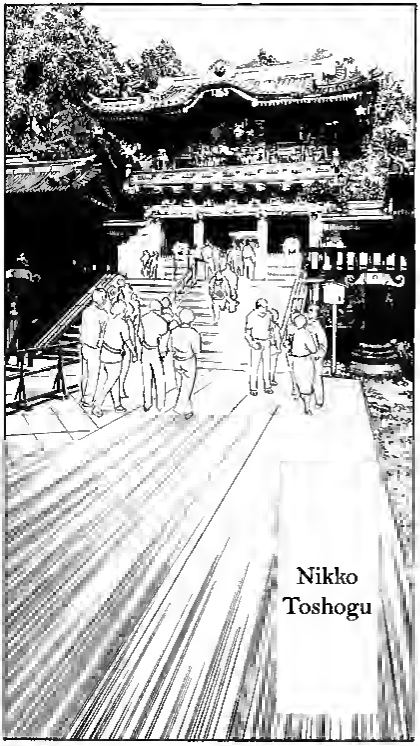
Masakado was bound... by the "Journey to the West"!
フッ
M... Ma-saka-do...
Me?
ゴボ ゴボ ゴボ...
I...I do have proof! It's not complete yet, but a... almost...
You ought to finish it yourself. This is outside my field.
I'm sorry, but I can't help you. Pardon me.
My doctor tells me not to go out walking too much. I don't have much strength left in me...

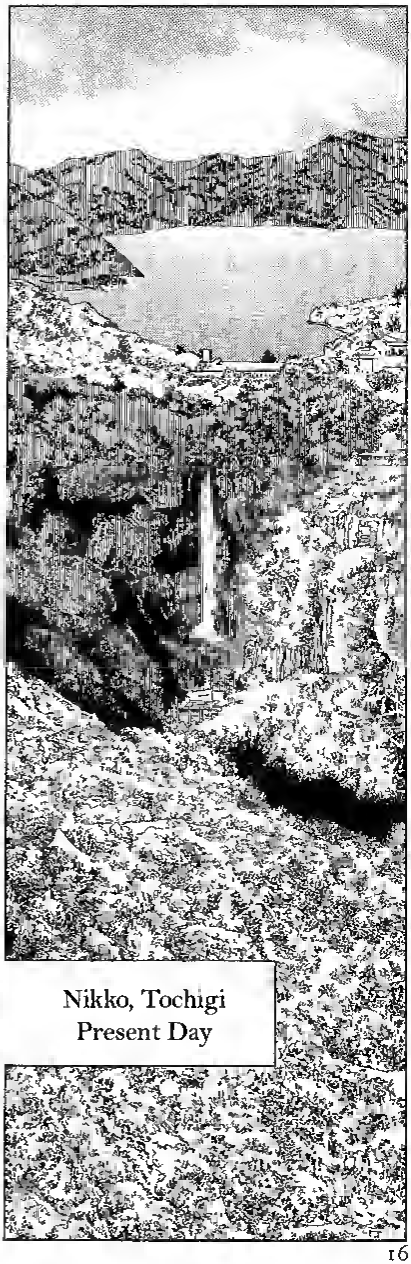
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
...
HEY!?

.....
FATHER!

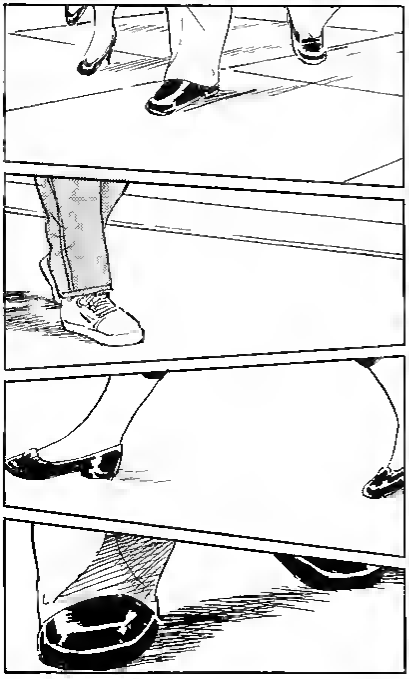
……
SEE NOT…
ドカカ…
HEAR NOT…
SPEAK NOT!

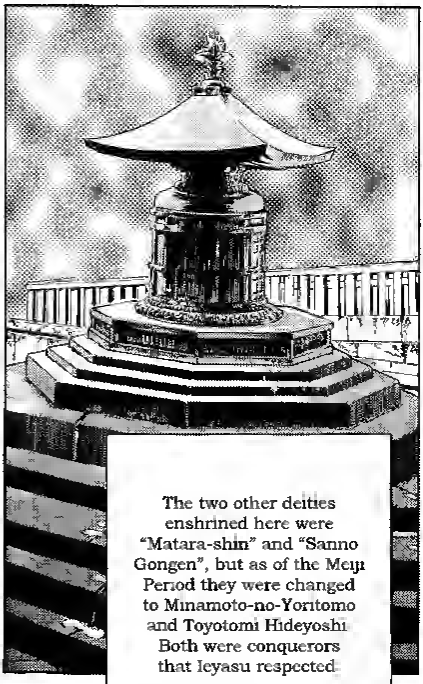
東照宮


Nikko
Toshogu

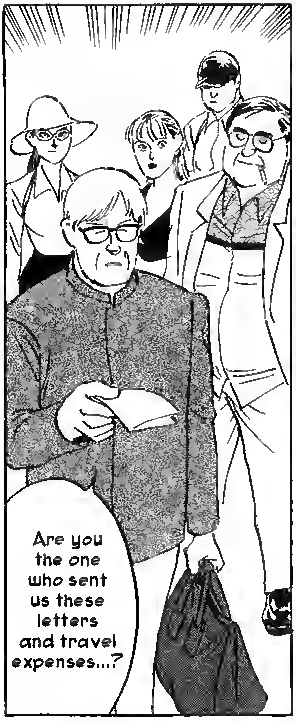

Nikko, Tochigi
Present Day

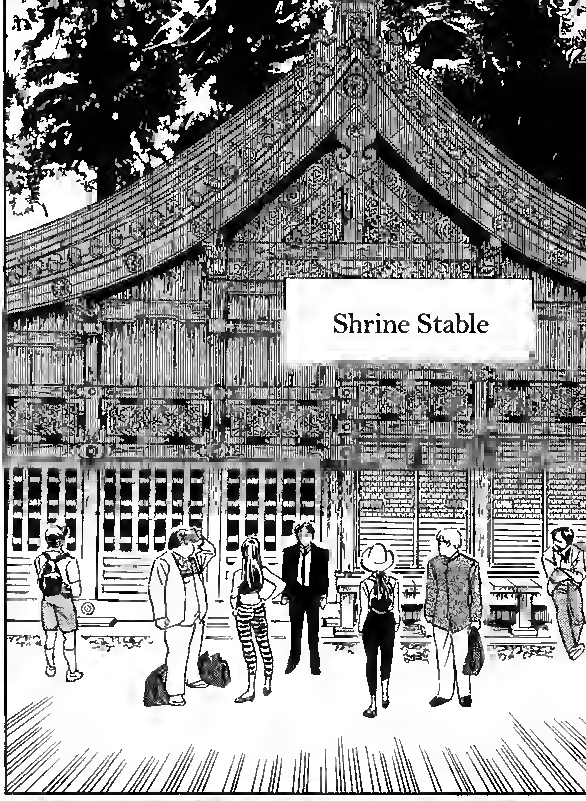
Tokugawa Ieyasu, the man that put an end to the era of Warring States and started the Edo Shogunate, passed away in Sunpu in 1616. His corpse was interred for one year on Mt. Kuno, after which it was moved to Nikko, where he became enshrined as "Tosho Daigongen".



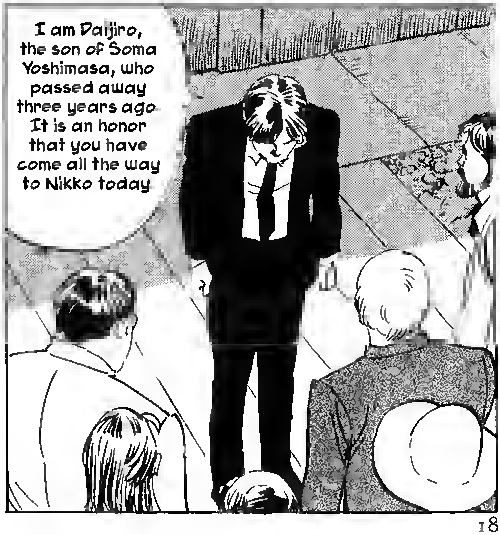


The two other deities enshrined here were "Matara-shin" and "Sanno Gongen", but as of the Meiji Period they were changed to Minamoto-no-Yoritomo and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Both were conquerors that Ieyasu respected.


Are you the one who sent us these letters and travel expenses...?


Shrine Stable

As people who had assisted my father in life, your names were all recorded in my father's research notes


I am Daijiro, the son of Soma Yoshimasa, who passed away three years ago. It is an honor that you have come all the way to Nikko today.

Ms. Zaisen Eriko, the religious scholar.
I only received a letter from him asking a question, and he had already passed away by the time I got around to writing back..
You're Mr. Hiruko Yoshio the historical novelist, right?
Assisted him? But I only met him once.
And Mr. Fukutake Rokuro, the local historian from Ibaraki...
Long time no see, Daijiro.
Mr. Oguro Yoshikane, the historical magazine editor.
Mr. Hara Yasusada, from K Publishing's operations department.
Oh, this girl's with me. Is that alright? I'll pay for any extra charges she may incur.
Thank you... Mr. Kotobuki the TV director contacted me to tell me he couldn't make it. But these numbers aren't adding up.

See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil...
The Shrine Stable is a stable for the divine horses. It contains several carvings of monkeys. So those are the famous "Three Wise Monkeys"...
So we find Koshin here, too...
The Three Wise Monkeys are a theme consistently associated with the Koshin faith...

Yes, it has.
Don't mention it. You have my condolences. So it's been three years already...
Professor Munakata! You were the one who took my father to the hospital... I'm sorry I couldn't show you my thanks...
As you all know, my father was conducting an ongoing research project on Taira-no-Masakado, but left it unfinished..
Now I, his son, have inherited it. I would like to tell you about my father's research through this tour.
Now that all seven of us are here, I would like to invite you on a tour of the shrine, as I described in the letter.

Can we start with the shrine stable here? Your father seemed rather fixated on monkeys and the Journey to the West"...
And speaking of China, one example of this was the Protector of the Stables in Journey to the West"...
The practice of placing monkeys near stables came from the sayings of the Eurasian nomads and China, that they would ward off fire and disease..
Long, long ago, a "stone monkey" was born from a stone at the summit of Mt. Huaguo. He became the king of the monkeys, studied under a great sage and attained vast spiritual powers, and took on the name Sun Wukong.
Protector of the Stables...?

The Protector of the Stables was no more than a mere guard for the heavenly horses. Having learned of this, Wukong returned to Mt. Huaguo in a rage.

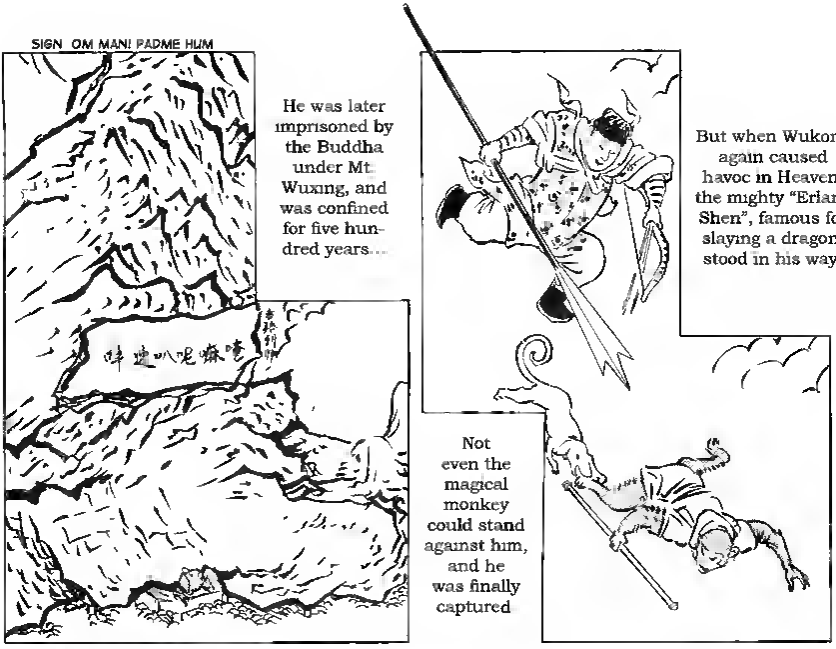
As Wukong grew by the day, and began to disrupt the order, the Jade Emperor decided to keep him in check by inviting him to the Heavenly Realm and giving him the role of "Protector of the Stables".

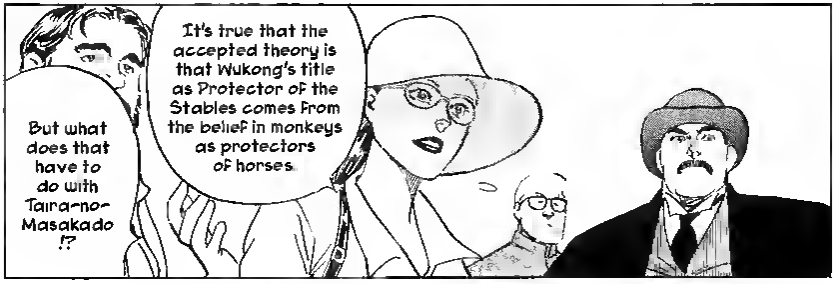
SIGN: GREAT SAGE, EQUAL OF HEAVEN

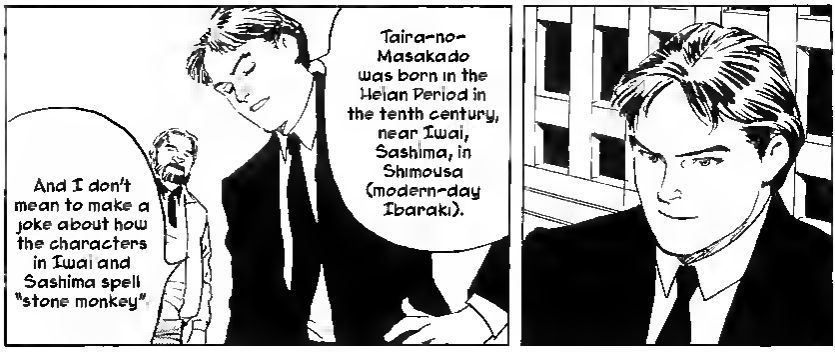
In order to apprehend Wukong for disobeying the Jade Emperor's orders, the armies of Heaven closed in on him, but they were no match for Sun Wukong, the Great Sage, Equal of Heaven, and were routed.

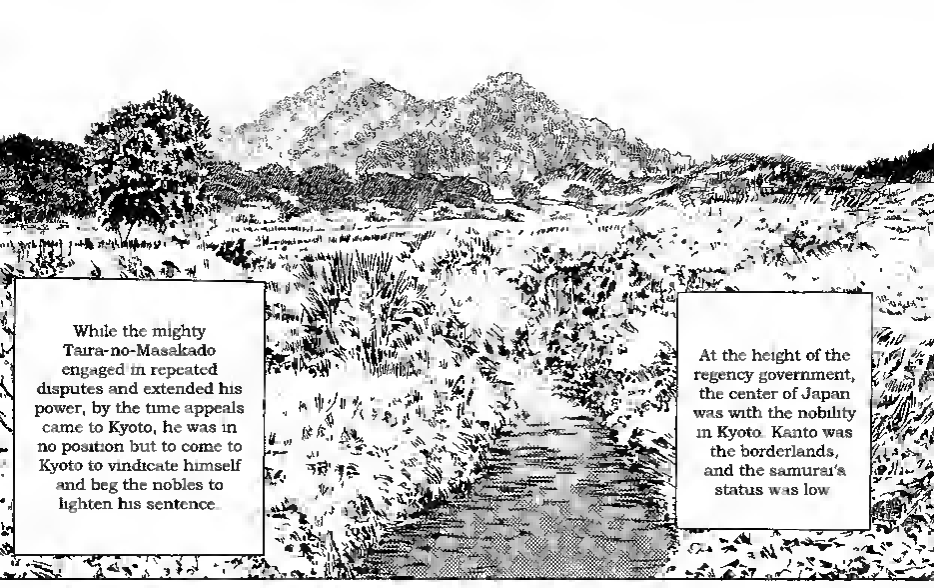
Wukong gave himself a title to better suit himself, the "Great Sage, Equal of Heaven".

In other words, a sage so great he was Heaven's equal!

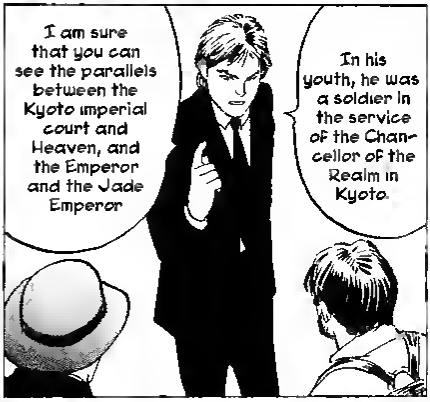

SIGN OM MANI PADME HUM
He was later imprisoned by the Buddha under Mt. Wuxing, and was confined for five hundred years...
But when Wukong again caused havoc in Heaven, the mighty "Erlang Shen", famous for slaying a dragon, stood in his way
Not even the magical monkey could stand against him, and he was finally captured


But what does that have to do with Taira-no-Masakado !?
It's true that the accepted theory is that Wukong's title as Protector of the Stables comes from the belief in monkeys as protectors of horses.


And I don't mean to make a joke about how the characters in Iwai and Sashima spell "stone monkey".
Taira-no-Masakado was born in the Heian Period in the tenth century, near Iwai, Sashima, in Shimousa (modern-day Ibaraki).


While the mighty Taira-no-Masakado engaged in repeated disputes and extended his power, by the time appeals came to Kyoto, he was in no position but to come to Kyoto to vindicate himself and beg the nobles to lighten his sentence.
At the height of the regency government, the center of Japan was with the nobility in Kyoto. Kanto was the borderlands, and the samurai's status was low.

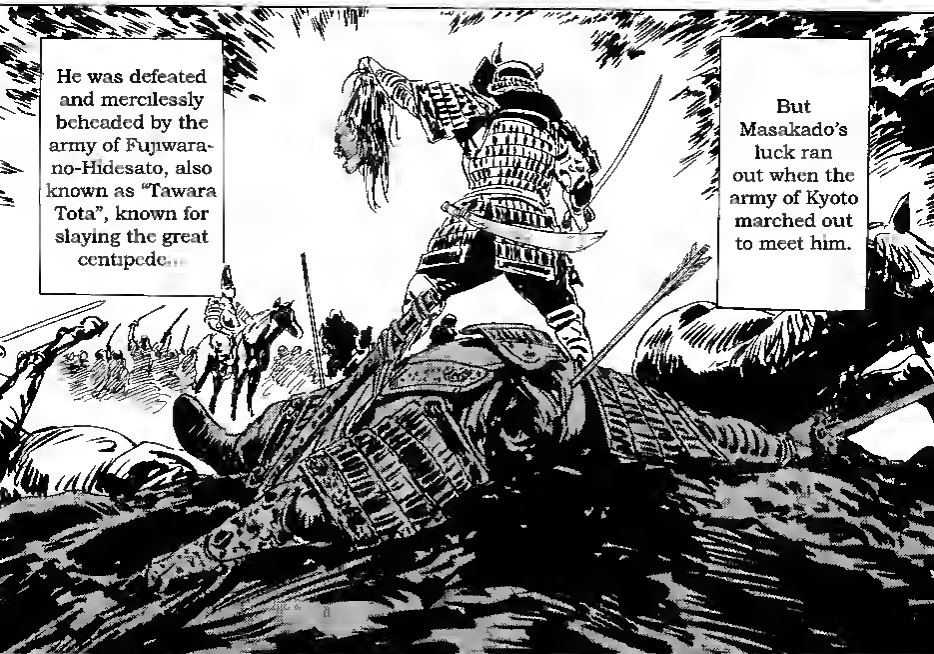
Now what was the duty that the imperial court had given Masakado? One theory states that he was posted at an "official farm".


I am sure that you can see the parallels between the Kyoto imperial court and Heaven, and the Emperor and the Jade Emperor
In his youth, he was a soldier in the service of the Chancellor of the Realm in Kyoto.

The official farms were pastures for the breeding and supply of war horses needed by the state. They were established all over the country, and local lords were appointed to serve as their managers.
Taira-no-Masakado used the two official farms of Nagasu and Oyu as his bases, so there is a high possibility that he was given that role.
Protector of the Stables...
He finally declared himself the "New Emperor", and enacted an enthronement ceremony.
In 939, Masakado attacked the provincial office of Hitachi and began his open rebellion.
Masakado, with his seven body doubles that no one could distinguish, and his cavalry raised on the ranches, made his way into the provinces of Shimozuke and Kozuke.

This was no mere revolt, it was a revolution! To the imperial court, it must have been just as if he named himself the "Great Sage, Equal to Heaven"!
The "New Emperor"... An emperor to equal the traditional emperor!

He heh...


He was defeated and mercilessly beheaded by the army of Fujiwara-no-Hidesato, also known as "Tawara Tota", known for slaying the great centipede...
But Masakado's luck ran out when the army of Kyoto marched out to meet him.

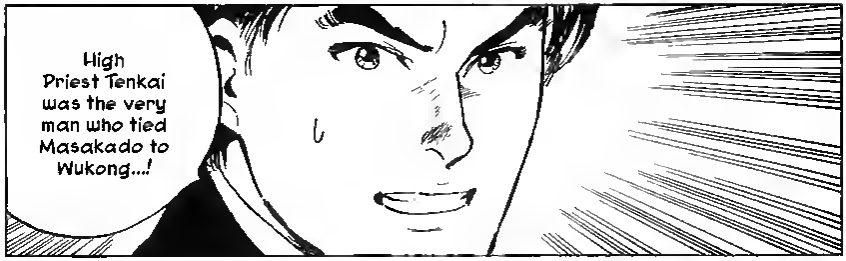
EEEEEE EEEEEK!
Even assuming for argument's sake that they had some strange connection, that's as far as it goes.
Taira-no-Masakado is dead.
but one is historical fact, and the other is an even earlier folk tale. Any similarities would have to be coincidence.
Well, that's rather amusing.
The main plot of "Journey to the West" states that Sun Wukong was later saved by the monk Xuanzang and assisted him in his pilgrimage to India. They are incomparable.
But then he thought of it this way...
Yes, yes! This was just my father's idea. He simply thought they seemed similar.

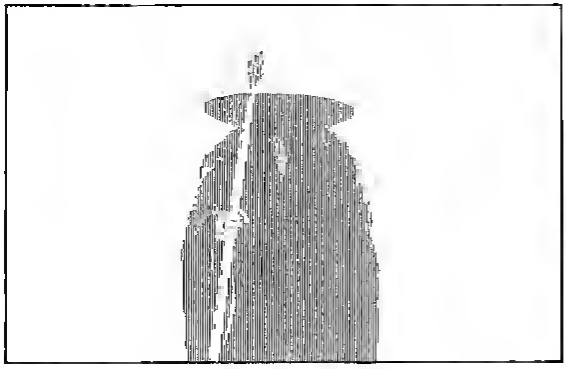
What if...
What if another historical person came up with that same fantasy...?
What if, centuries after Masakado's death, someone alluded Masakado's spirit to Sun Wukong, and used it to stage his own journey to India?
You'll have to excuse me now. I'll have no part in this nonsense.
Go ahead.. You're free to leave whenever you like.
I TOLD YOUR FATHER ALREADY, I HAVE NO INTENTION OF COOPERATING ON SUCH A PULP STORY!

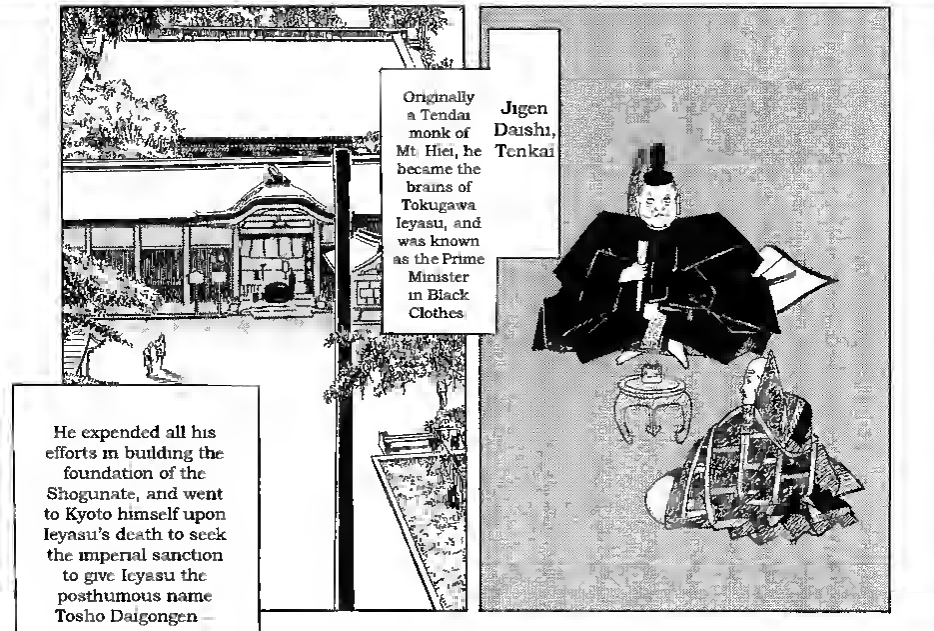
You've brought me out all the way to Nikko, so I want to stop by the grave of High Priest Tenkai while I'm here.
I have a personal interest in him, you see...

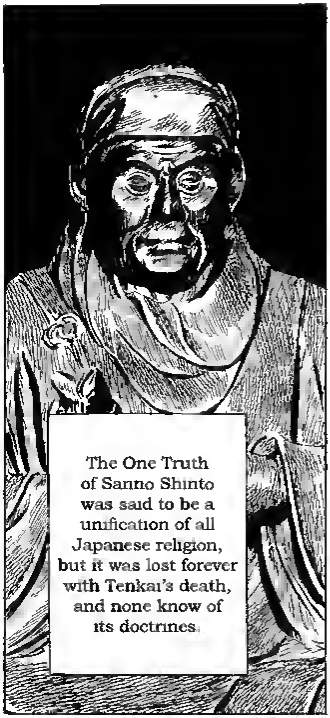
I'm sorry, but I, too, must take my leave

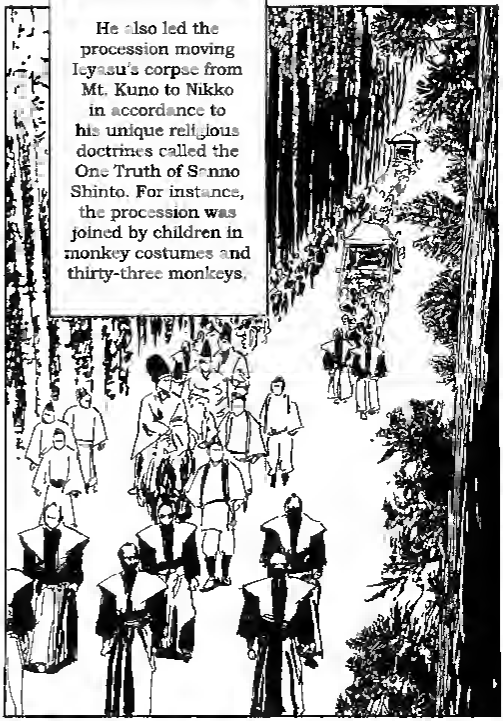
Then you can come to that grave with us, Professor Munakata!

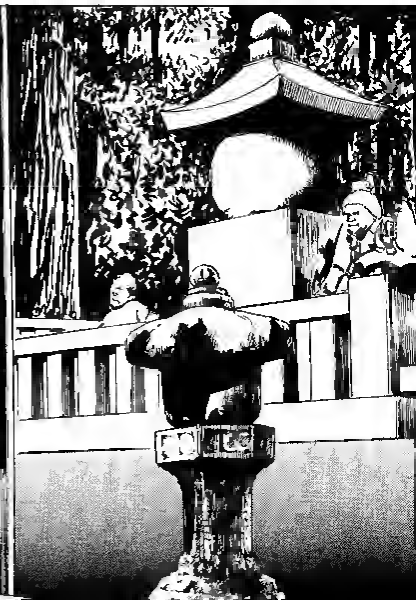

High Priest Tenkai was the very man who tied Masakado to Wukong...!




Jigen Daishi, Tenkai
Originally a Tendai monk of Mt. Hiei, he became the brains of Tokugawa Ieyasu, and was known as the Prime Minister in Black Clothes
He expended all his efforts in building the foundation of the Shogunate, and went to Kyoto himself upon Ieyasu's death to seek the imperial sanction to give Ieyasu the posthumous name Tosho Daigongen


The One Truth of Sanno Shinto was said to be a unification of all Japanese religion, but it was lost forever with Tenkai's death, and none know of its doctrines.


He also led the procession moving Ieyasu's corpse from Mt. Kuno to Nikko in accordance to his unique religious doctrines called the One Truth of Sanno Shinto. For instance, the procession was joined by children in monkey costumes and thirty-three monkeys.



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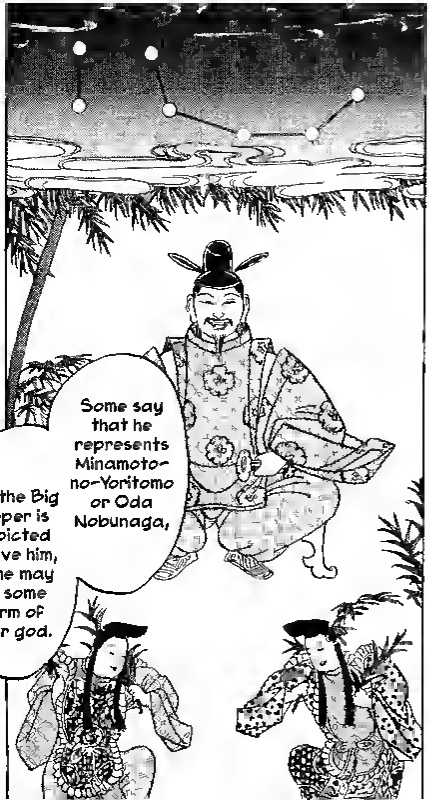
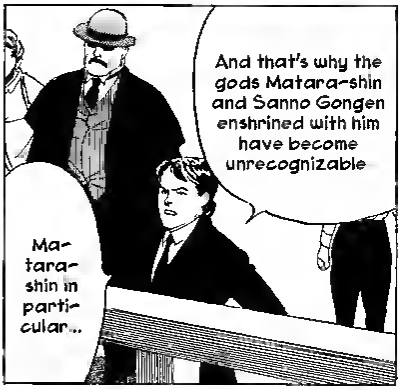
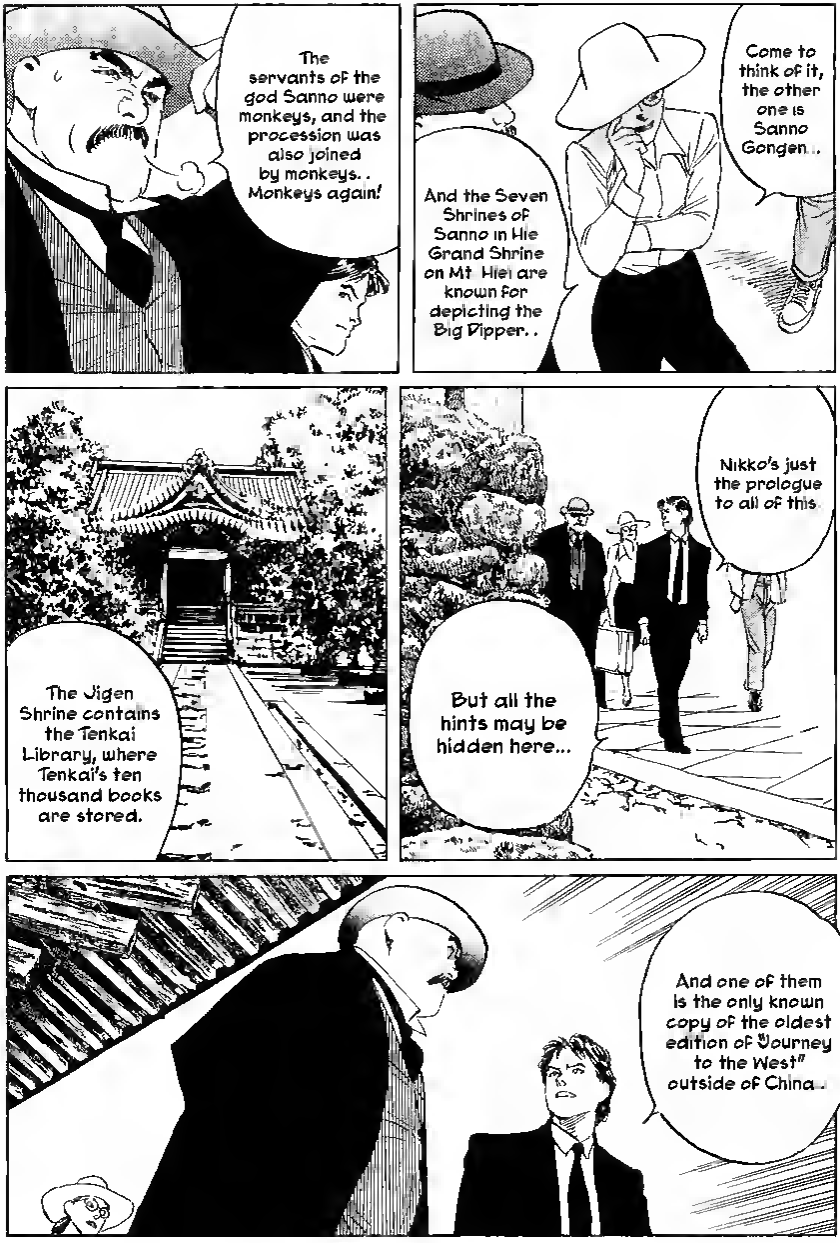
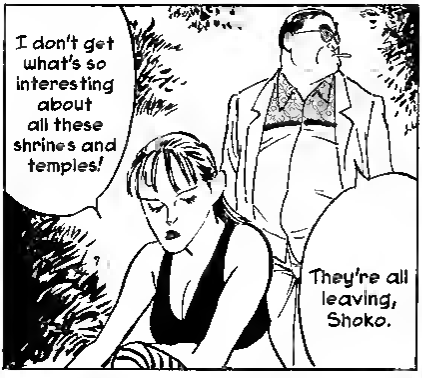
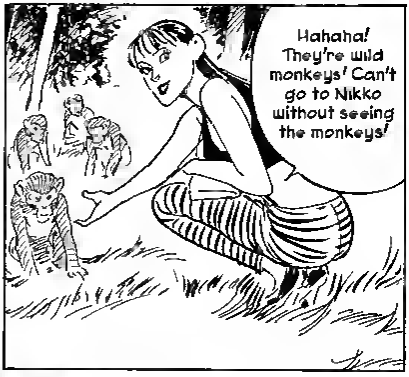
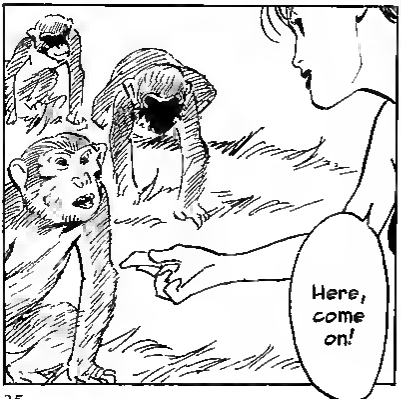

Some say that he represents Minamoto-no-Yoritomo or Oda Nobunaga,
but the Big Dipper is depicted above him, so he may be some form of star god.

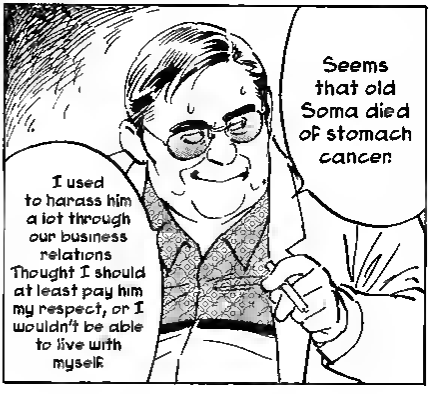

And that's why the gods Matara-shin and Sanno Gongen enshrined with him have become unrecognizable
Matara-shin in particular...


The servants of the god Sanno were monkeys, and the procession was also joined by monkeys.. Monkeys again!
And the Seven Shrines of Sanno in Hie Grand Shrine on Mt. Hiei are known for depicting the Big Dipper..
Come to think of it, the other one is Sanno Gongen...
The Jigen Shrine contains the Tenkai Library, where Tenkai's ten thousand books are stored.
But all the hints may be hidden here...
Nikko's just the prologue to all of this.
And one of them is the only known copy of the oldest edition of "Journey to the West" outside of China..

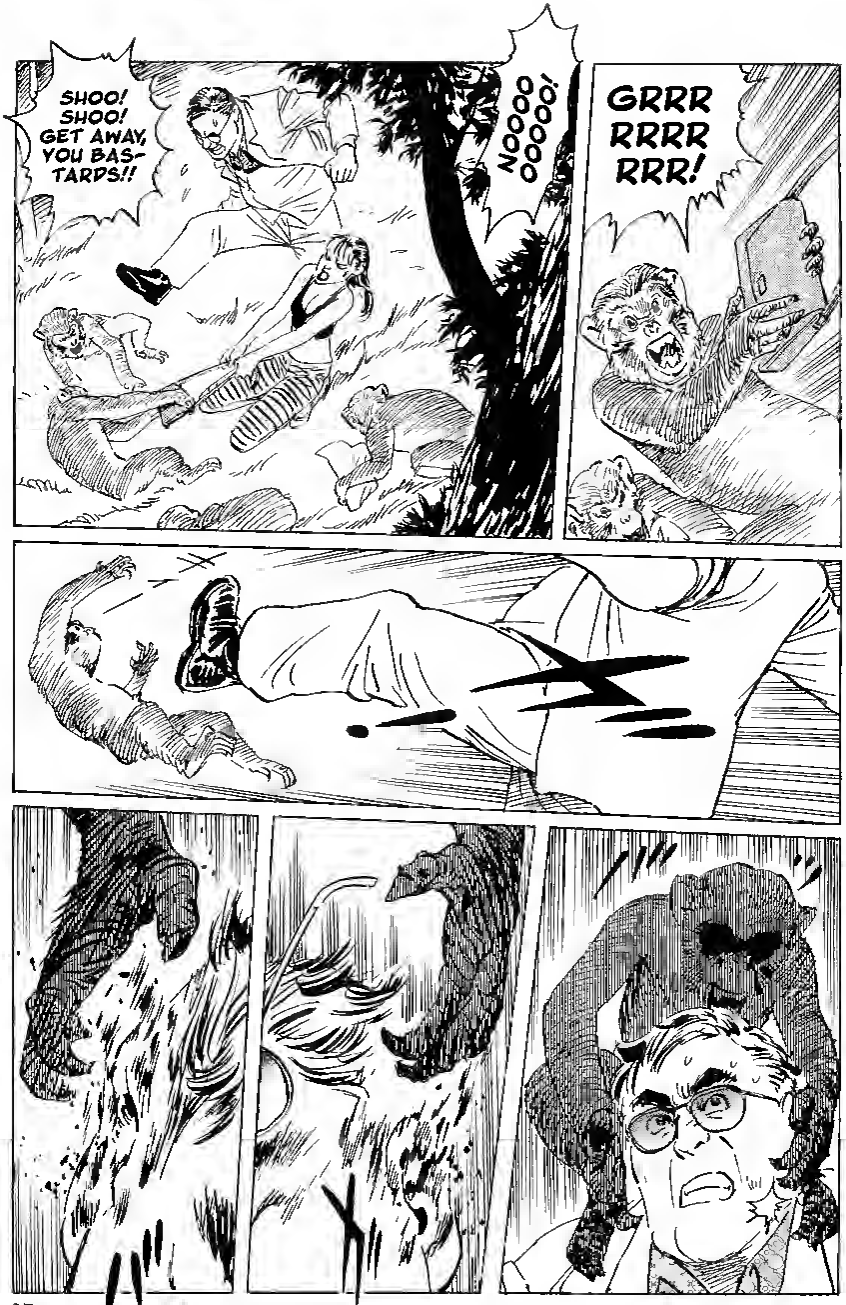

I don't get what's so interesting about all these shrines and temples!
They're all leaving, Shoko.


Hahaha! They're wild monkeys! Can't go to Nikko without seeing the monkeys!

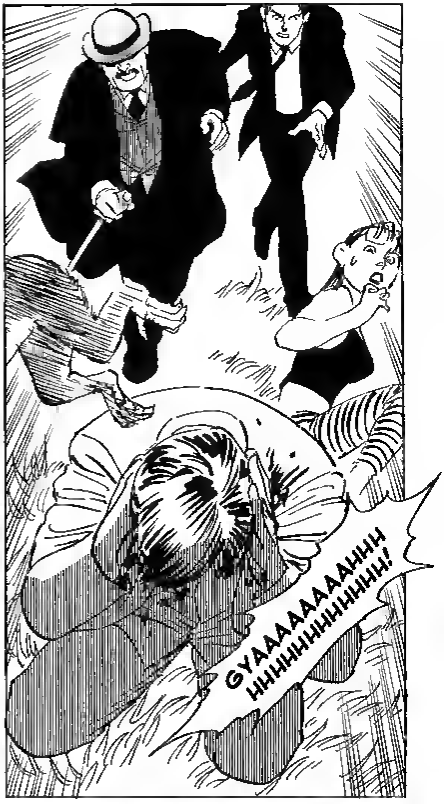

Here, come on!

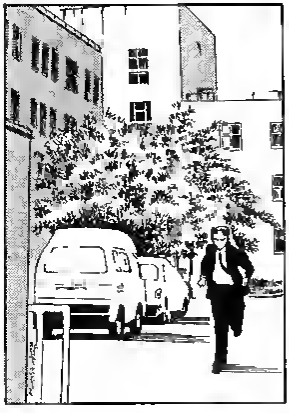

Seems that old Soma died of stomach cancer.
I used to harass him a lot through our business relations. Thought I should at least pay him my respect, or I wouldn't be able to live with myself.

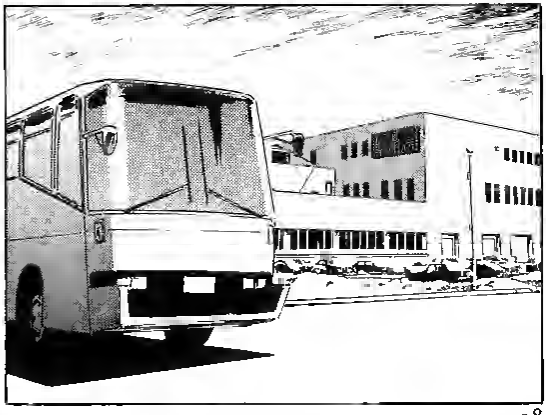
He's right, Daijiro. I've known your father for some time now, but whenever he got to the most crucial parts, he'd insist that he didn't have definite proof!
There are a lot of overlapping components. I can't just give it a simple explanation.
You're really beating around the bush. Why can't you just explain everything right here and now?
Well...
What do you mean, my real goal...?
I have a feeling you're hiding something. Isn't this just research? Why don't you tell us your real goal?
AIIIIEEEEEEE EEEEEEEEE!


SHOO! SHOO! GET AWAY, YOU BAS-TARDS!!
OOOOO!
GRRR RRRR RRR!

WAAAAA AAAUGH! WAAAAA AAAAAA AAUGH!


GYAAAAAAAAHH HHHHHHHHHHH!

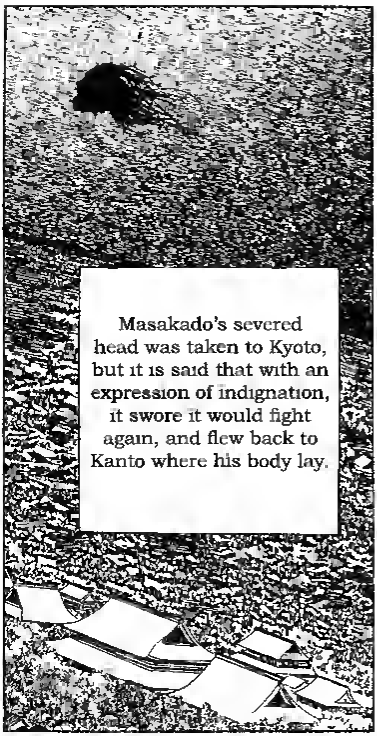


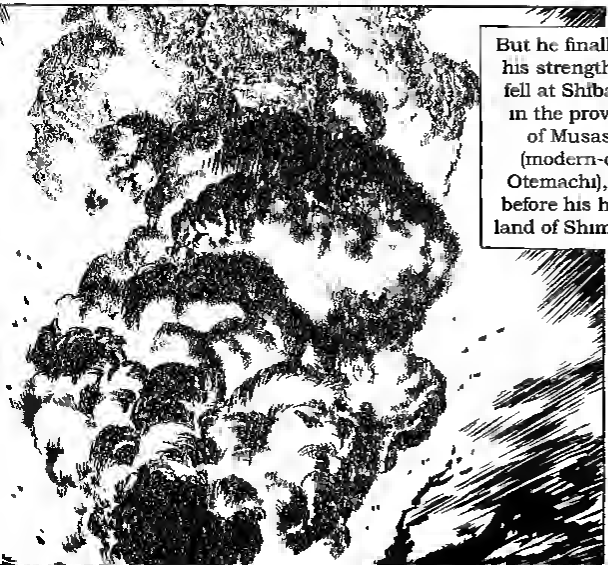


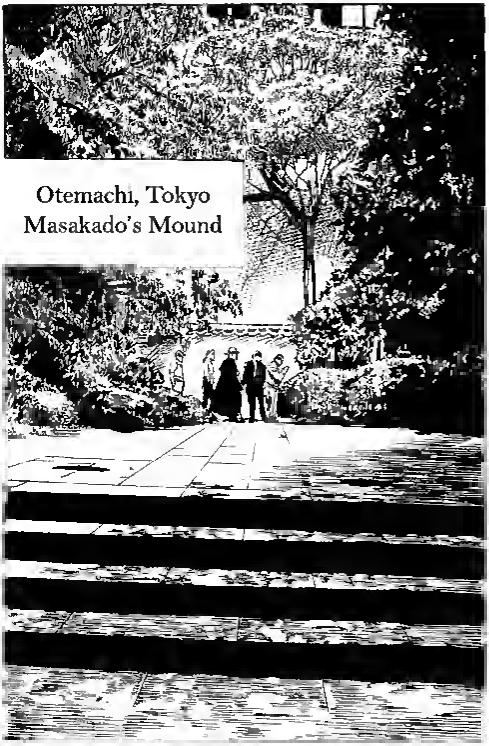
Okay, then. Our first destination is Tokyo.
Yes, sir.
ブルル
Fortunately his injuries weren't all that serious. They'll be testing him for infection and discharging him tomorrow. His date's already gone home.
.....
Thanks to Hara, he felt a constant pain in his stomach...
My father ran a small printing and book-binding business. He was like a subcontractor to Mr Hara's K Publishing.
Not only was he pestered with orders, but he couldn't refuse him when he haggled down the price.

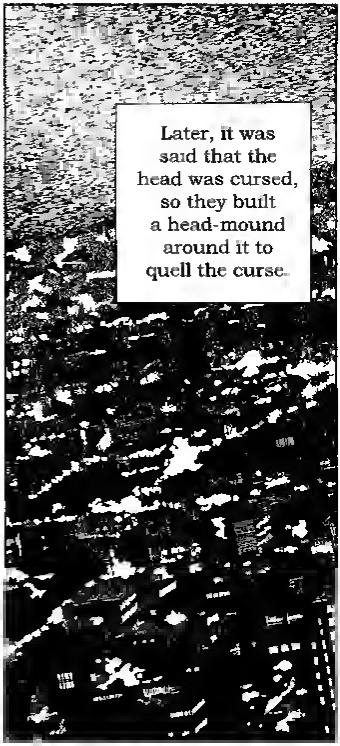
Sotokanda, Tokyo
Kanda Shrine
Now, the first step on our journey would have to be Kanda Shrine
The greatest shrine dedicated to Taira-no-Masakado
The primary deity enshrined here seems to be Onamuchi-no-Mikoto, also known by the name Okuninushi, which is a syncretism of Daikoku
Daikokuten in Masakado's shrine...?

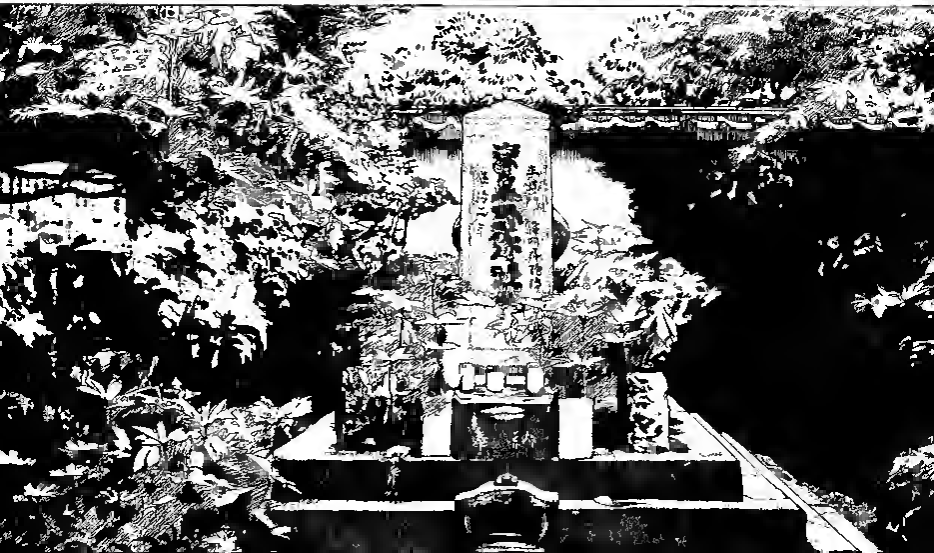
Of course we'll go there. But first...
Now that we're here at Kanda Shrine, shouldn't we go to Masakado's Mound, Daijiro? That's our starting point.
平将門霊
Spirit of Taira-no-Masakado, to Ward Off Evil and Bring Prosperity
除災
I've bought you all talismans to ward off curses. There's one for each of you.
Ward off curses...

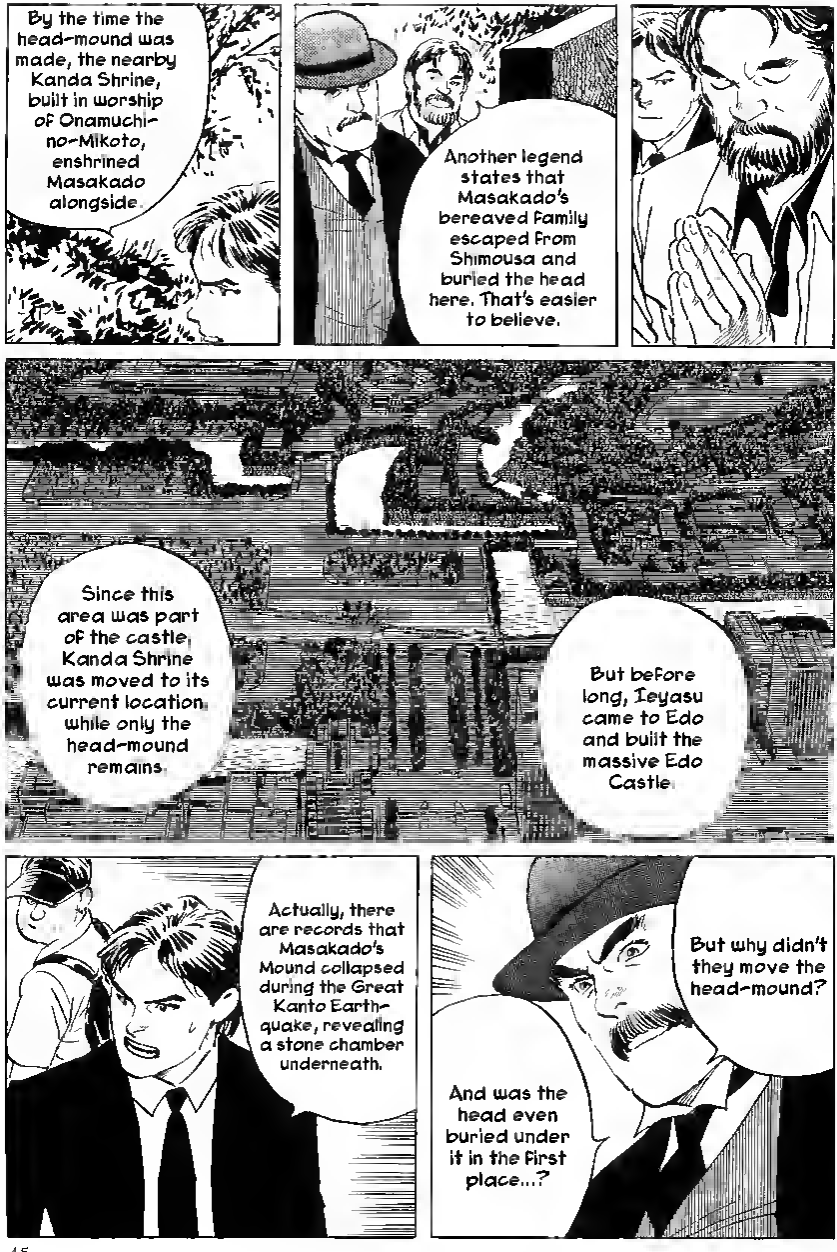

Masakado's severed head was taken to Kyoto, but it is said that with an expression of indignation, it swore it would fight again, and flew back to Kanto where his body lay.


But he finally lost his strength and fell at Shibasaki in the province of Musashi (modern-day Otemachi), just before his home-land of Shimousa.


Otemachi, Tokyo
Masakado's Mound


Later, it was said that the head was cursed, so they built a head-mound around it to quell the curse.




By the time the head-mound was made, the nearby Kanda Shrine, built in worship of Onamuchi-no-Mikoto, enshrined Masakado alongside.
Another legend states that Masakado's bereaved family escaped from Shimousa and buried the head here. That's easier to believe.
Since this area was part of the castle, Kanda Shrine was moved to its current location, while only the head-mound remains.
But before long, Ieyasu came to Edo and built the massive Edo Castle.
Actually, there are records that Masakado's Mound collapsed during the Great Kanto Earth-quake, revealing a stone chamber underneath.
But why didn't they move the head-mound?
And was the head even buried under it in the first place...?

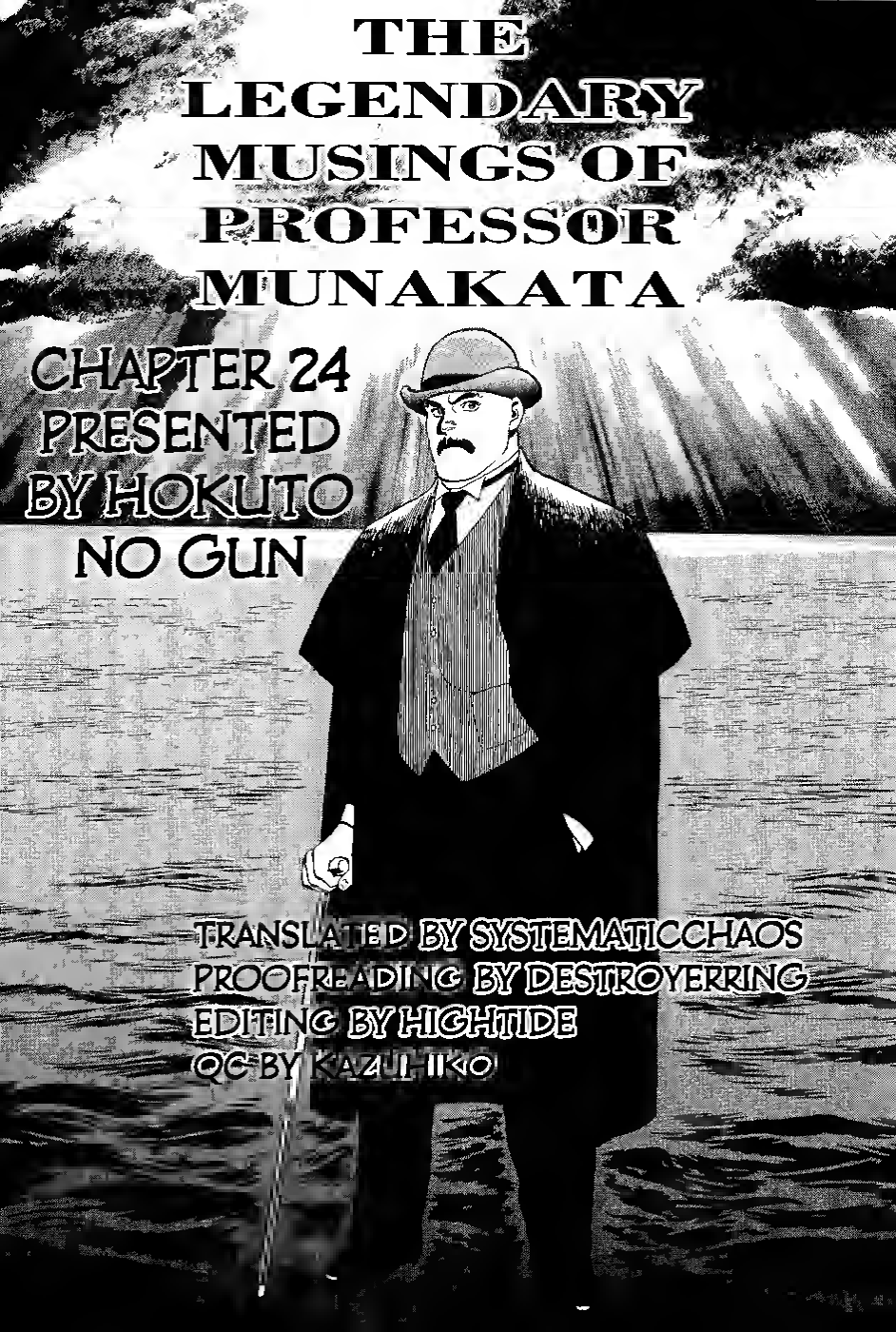
DID THEY INVESTIGATE IT? WHAT WAS INSIDE IT!?
There is a possibility that someone long ago had already removed its contents!
However...
EMPTY ...!?
while Masakado's head was imprisoned for seven hundred years in the chamber of Masakado's Mound...
Sun Wukong was imprisoned for five hundred years in the caverns of Mt Wuxing
AND FOR INSTANCE, HIGH PRIEST TENKAI...!
FOR INSTANCE, DURING THE BUILDING OF EDO CASTLE...

But to where, and for what ..!?
High Priest Tenkai, who would be Priest Xuanzang, must have set forth on his quest together with the head of Taira-no-Masakado, the spiteful general.

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 24

PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN



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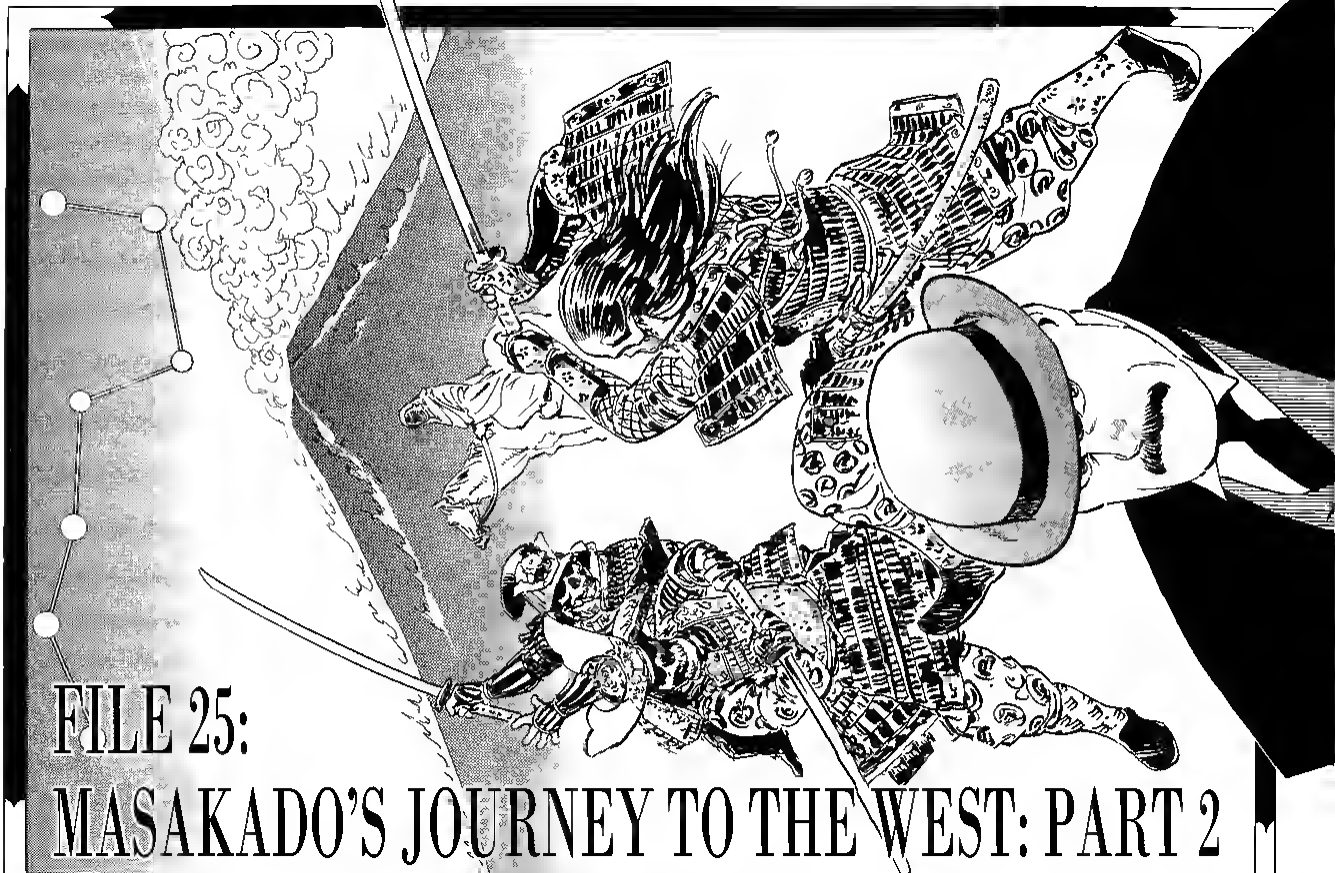
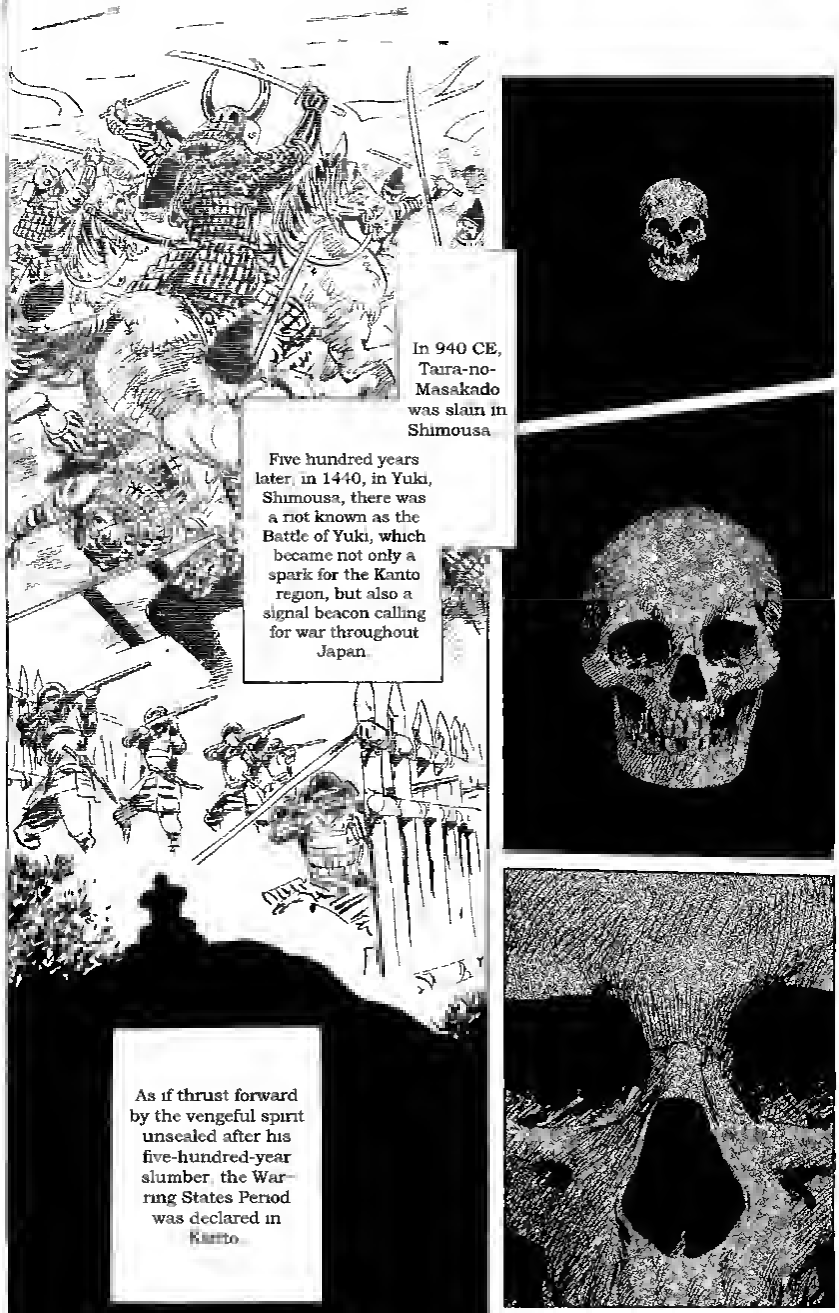
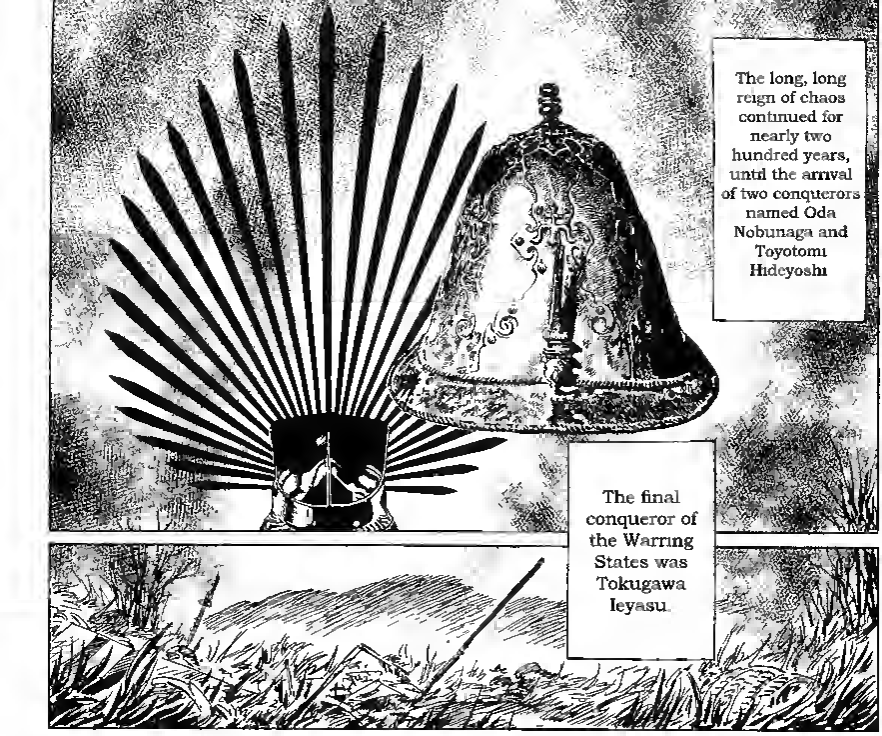
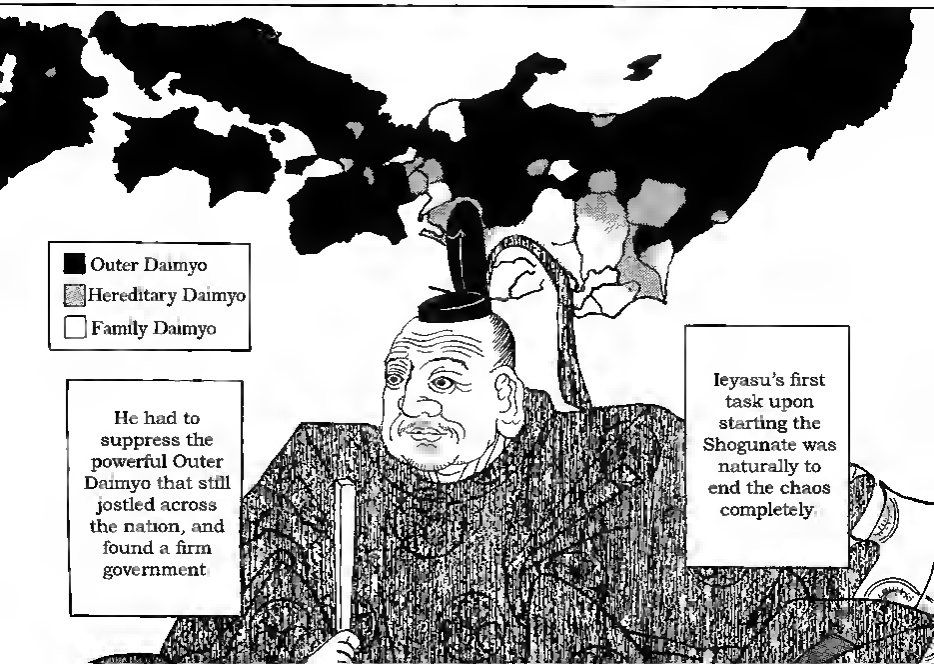
PROOFREADING BY DESTROYERRING
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO



FILE 25:
MASAKADO'S JOURNEY TO THE WEST: PART 2


In 940 CE, Taira-no-Masakado was slain in Shimousa.
Five hundred years later, in 1440, in Yuki, Shimousa, there was a riot known as the Battle of Yuki, which became not only a spark for the Kanto region, but also a signal beacon calling for war throughout Japan.
As if thrust forward by the vengeful spirit unsealed after his five-hundred-year slumber, the War-ring States Period was declared in Kanto.

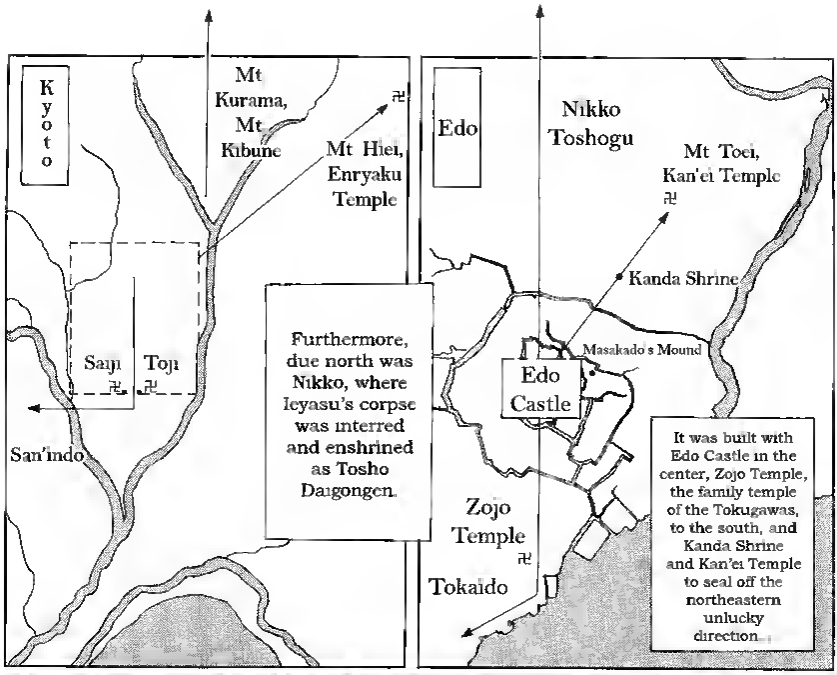

The long, long reign of chaos continued for nearly two hundred years, until the arrival of two conquerors named Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi
The final conqueror of the Warring States was Tokugawa Ieyasu.

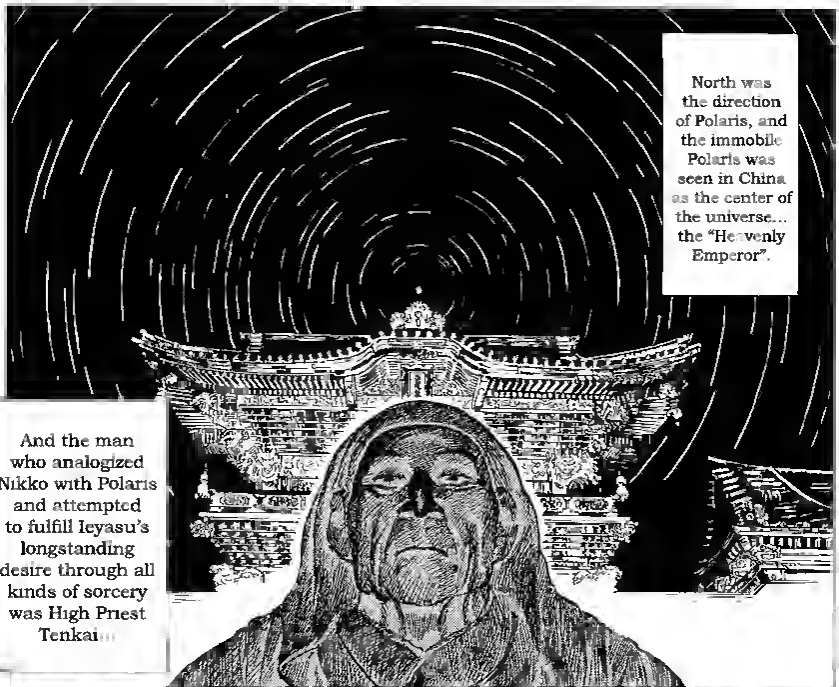

Outer Daimyo
Hereditary Daimyo
Family Daimyo
He had to suppress the powerful Outer Daimyo that still jostled across the nation, and found a firm government.
Ieyasu's first task upon starting the Shogunate was naturally to end the chaos completely.

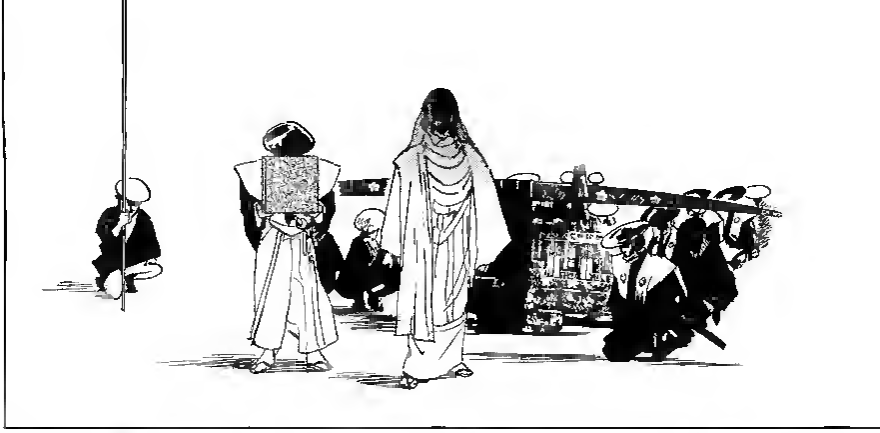
The second task was to build the Kanto Plains, which was no more than a desolate borderland filled with common reeds, into a massive metropolis to rival the millennial capital of Kyoto.

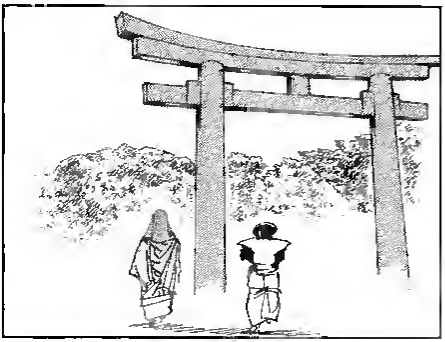
Not only was the terrain remodeled in the style of Kyoto, with its Four Gods' topography, it was planned in a magical configuration on a mass scale.

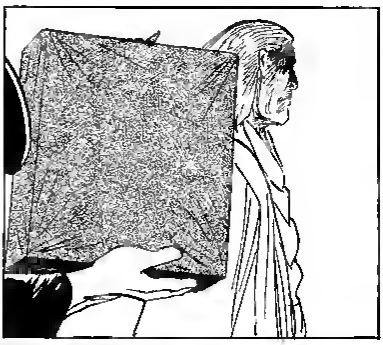
And so, the construction of Edo and Edo Castle...

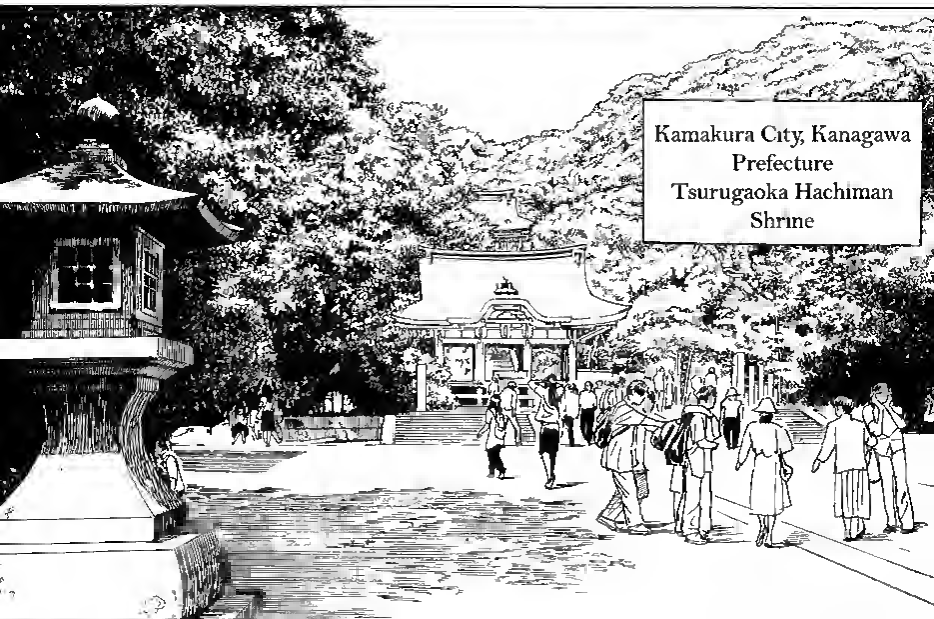

Kyoto
Mt Kurama, Mt Kibune
Mt Hiei, Enryaku Temple
Saiji
Toji
San'indo
Furthermore, due north was Nikko, where Ieyasu's corpse was interred and enshrined as Tosho Daigongen.
Edo
Nikko Toshogu
Mt Toei, Kan'ei Temple
Kanda Shrine
Masakado's Mound
Edo Castle
It was built with Edo Castle in the center, Zojo Temple, the family temple of the Tokugawas, to the south, and Kanda Shrine and Kan'ei Temple to seal off the northeastern unlucky direction.
Zojo Temple
Tokaido

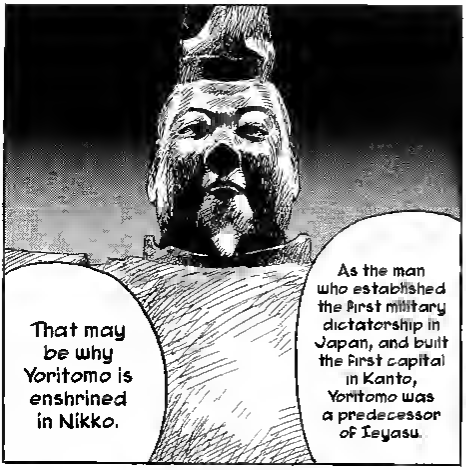

North was the direction of Polaris, and the immobile Polaris was seen in China as the center of the universe... the "Heavenly Emperor".
And the man who analogized Nikko with Polaris and attempted to fulfill Ieyasu's longstanding desire through all kinds of sorcery was High Priest Tenkai.

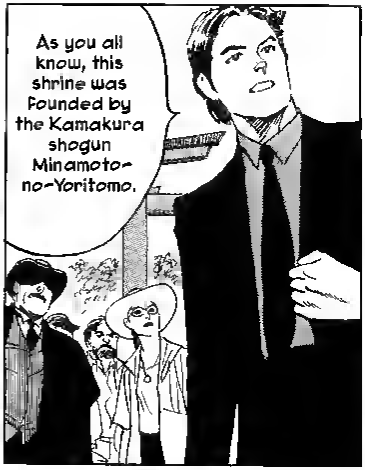


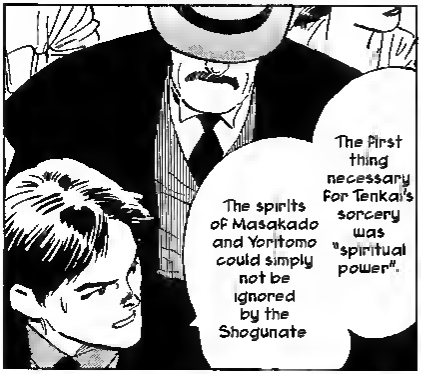


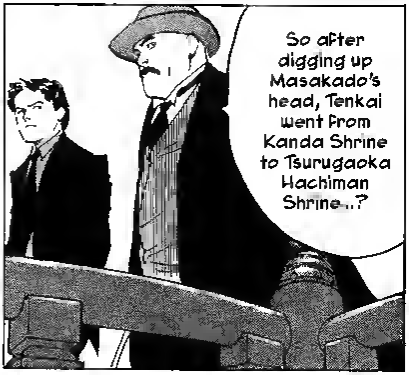



Kamakura City, Kanagawa
Prefecture
Tsurugaoka Hachiman
Shrine

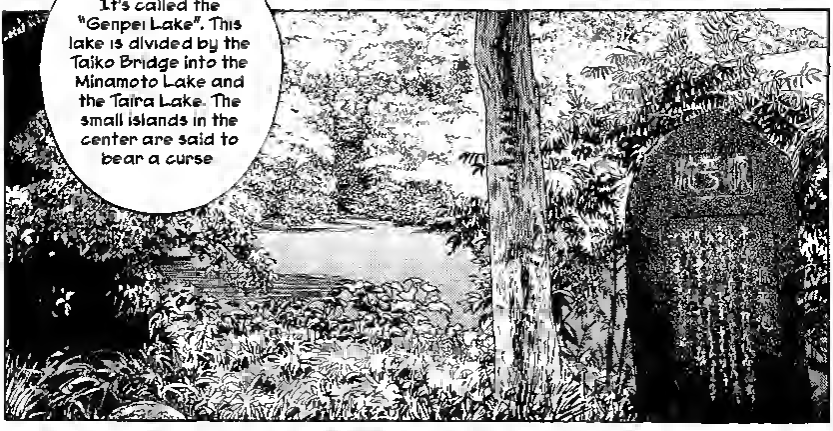

That may be why Yoritomo is enshrined in Nikko.
As the man who established the first military dictatorship in Japan, and built the first capital in Kanto, Yoritomo was a predecessor of Ieyasu.

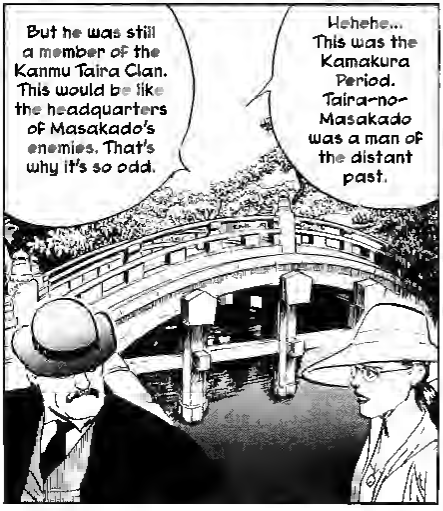

As you all know, this shrine was founded by the Kamakura shogun Minamoto-no-Yoritomo.

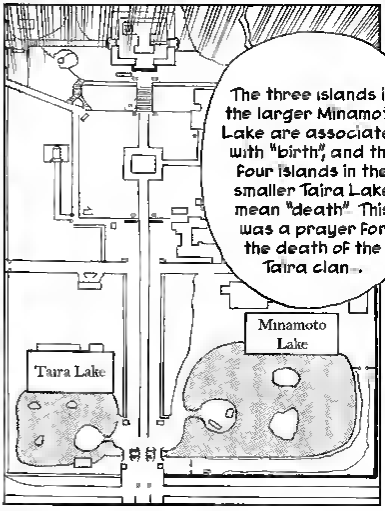

The spirits of Masakado and Yoritomo could simply not be ignored by the Shogunate
The first thing necessary for Tenkai's sorcery was "spiritual power".


So after digging up Masakado's head, Tenkai went from Kanda Shrine to Tsurugaoka Hachiman Shrine...?

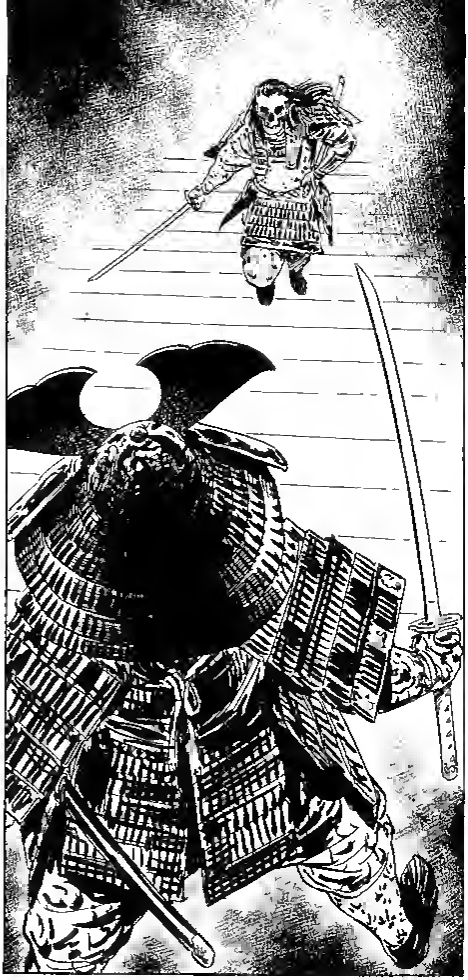
But this is a little odd...

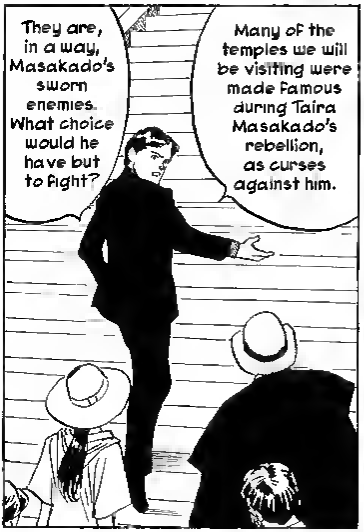

It's called the "Genpei Lake". This lake is divided by the Taiko Bridge into the Minamoto Lake and the Taira Lake. The small islands in the center are said to bear a curse


But he was still a member of the Kanmu Taira Clan. This would be like the headquarters of Masakado's enemies. That's why it's so odd.
Hehehe... This was the Kamakura Period. Taira-no-Masakado was a man of the distant past.

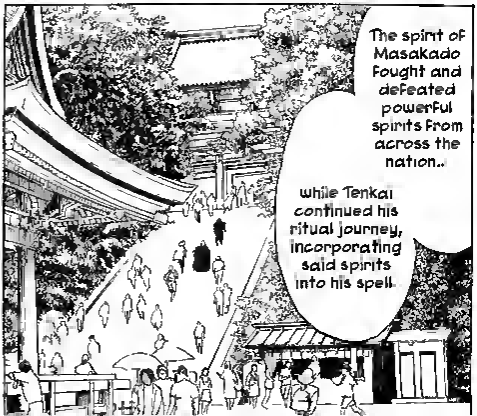

The three islands in the larger Minamoto Lake are associated with "birth", and the four islands in the smaller Taira Lake mean "death". This was a prayer for the death of the Taira clan.
Minamoto Lake
Taira Lake

To have the spirit of Yoritomo keep the spirit of Masakado in check!
To restrain spiritual power with spiritual power...
Then I can rephrase Tenkai's goal for you:



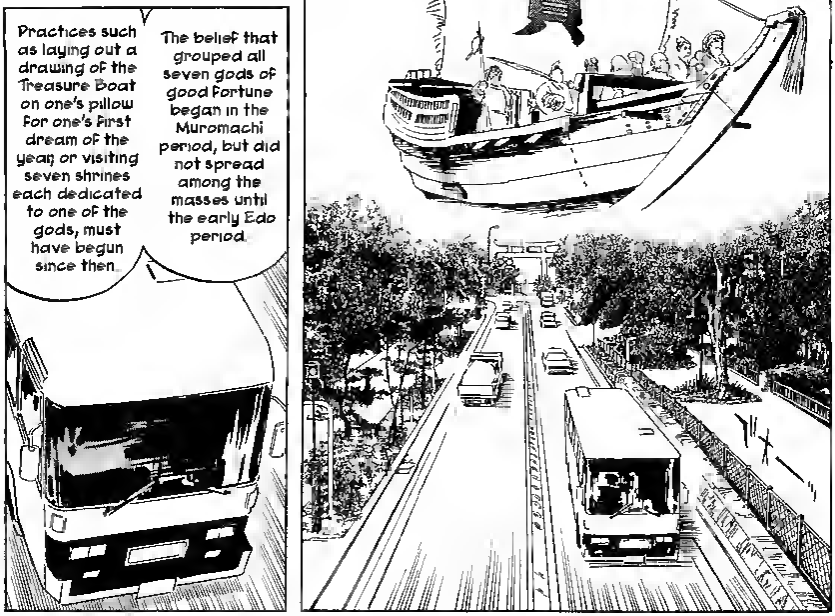

They are, in a way, Masakado's sworn enemies. What choice would he have but to fight?
Many of the temples we will be visiting were made famous during Taira Masakado's rebellion, as curses against him.

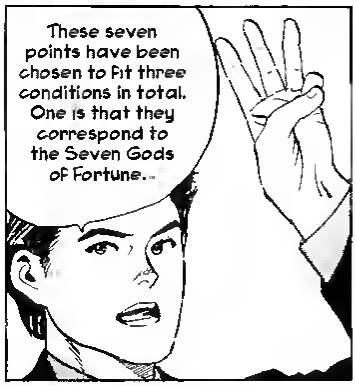
Just like Sun Wukong battled monsters from across the nation while Xuanzang made his way to India.

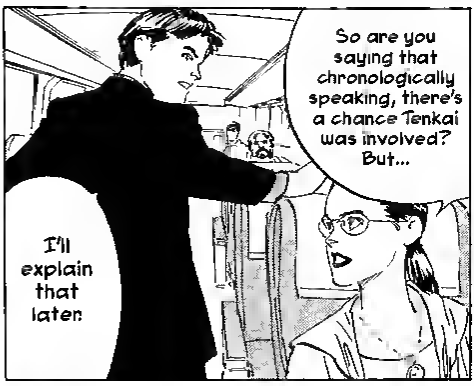

The spirit of Masakado fought and defeated powerful spirits from across the nation...
while Tenkai continued his ritual journey, incorporating said spirits into his spell.

Yes. One of Tsurugaoka Hachiman Shrine's famous national treasures is the statue of Benzaiten.
Benzaiten...?
First Daikoku in Kanda Shrine, and now Benten... It's like a tour of the Seven Gods of Fortune.
Seven Gods of Fortune?
but she is enshrined in the Minamoto clan's Hataage Benzaiten Shrine because Yoritomo had a vision of Benzaiten when he raised his army.
It equals the naked Benten of Enoshima,

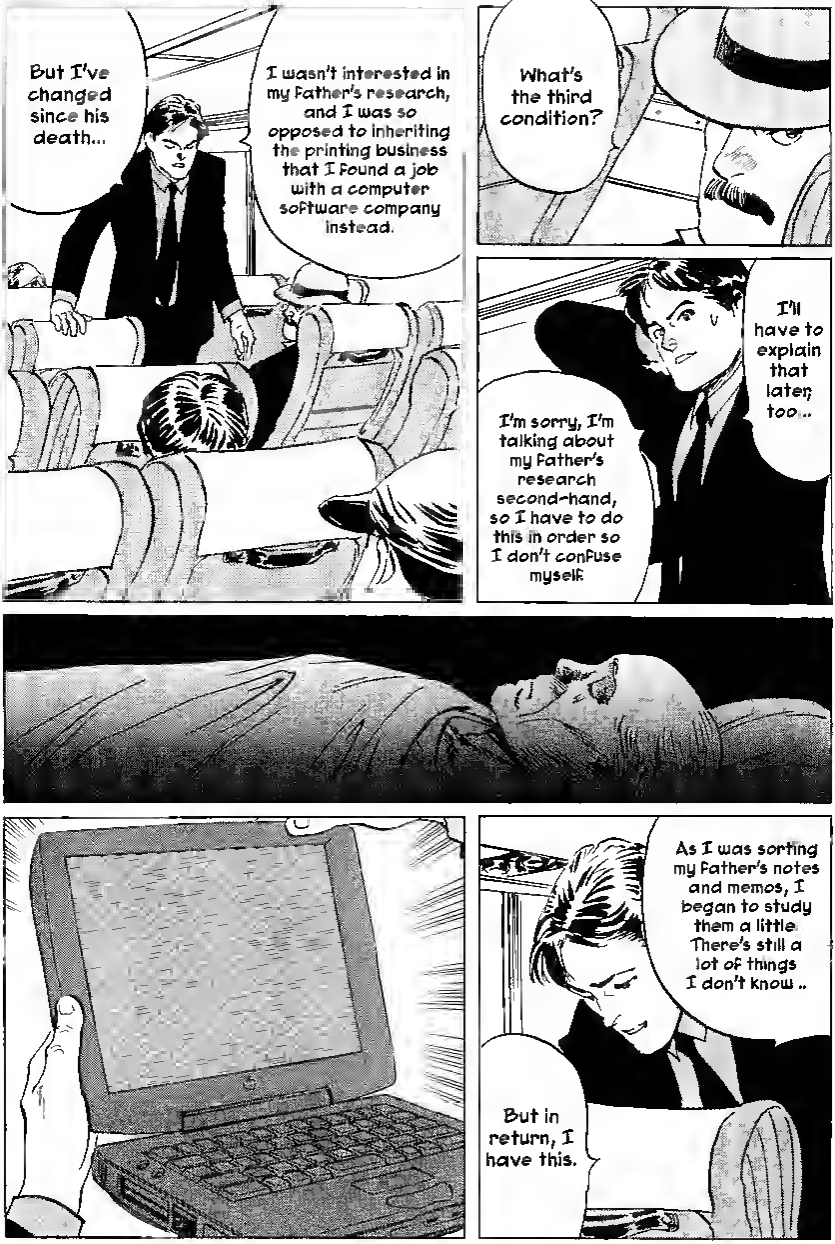
Daikokuten, Benzaiten, Fukurokuju, Jurojin, Ebisu, Bishamonten, and Hotei... And sometimes Kisshoten is included as well. You're not telling me you're tying them to Masakado, too!?
Does each of them correspond to one of the Seven Gods of Fortune?
Soma, you said we would be going to seven locations in total, right?
キバ
According to one theory, the first person to draw the Seven Gods of Fortune's Treasure Boat was High Priest Tenkai. Did you know that?


Practices such as laying out a drawing of the Treasure Boat on one's pillow for one's first dream of the year, or visiting seven shrines each dedicated to one of the gods, must have begun since then.
The belief that grouped all seven gods of good fortune began in the Muromachi period, but did not spread among the masses until the early Edo period.


These seven points have been chosen to fit three conditions in total. One is that they correspond to the Seven Gods of Fortune...


So are you saying that chronologically speaking, there's a chance Tenkai was involved? But...
I'll explain that later.

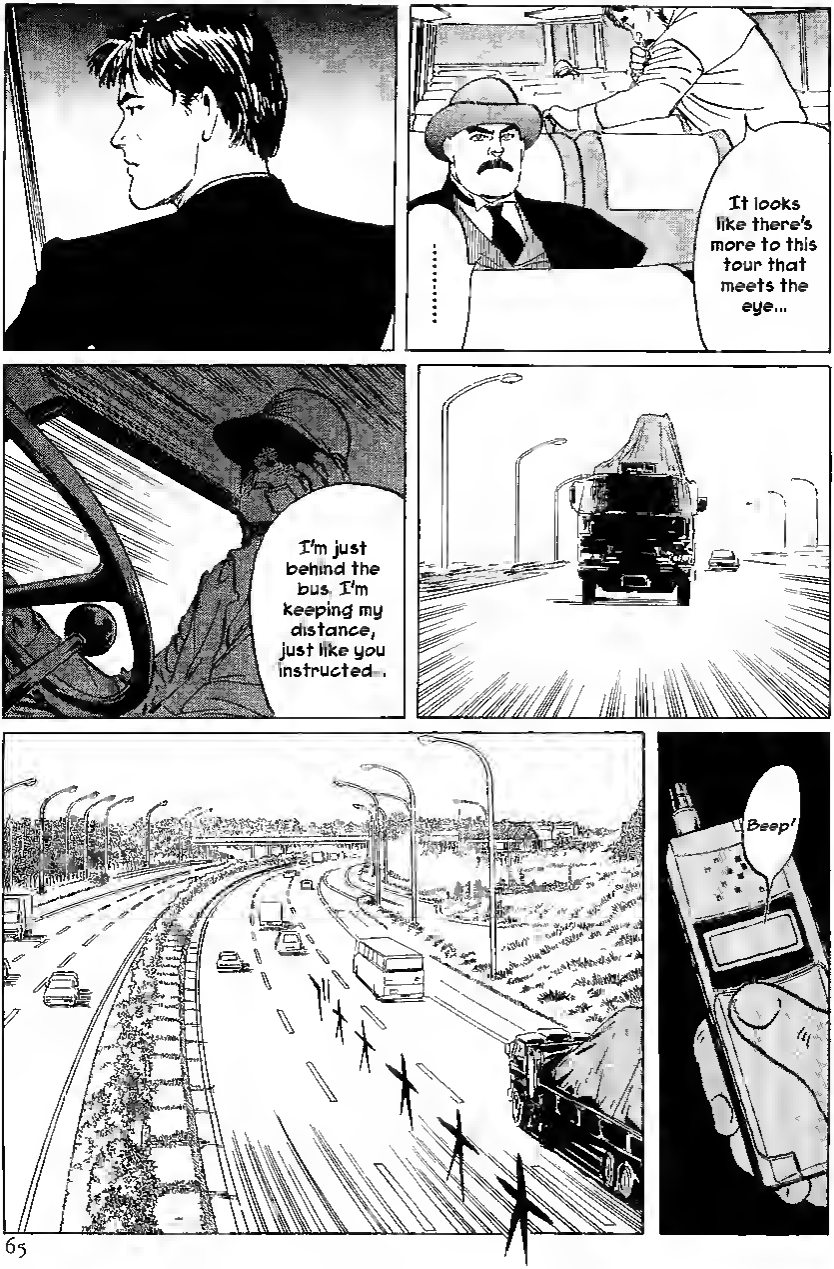
They have to be points that are irreplaceable in terms of spiritual power or belief, like Masakado's Kanda Shrine and Yoritomo's Tsurugaoka Hachiman Shrine.
The other, as I have mentioned before, is that they have the significance necessary for Tenkai's spell.

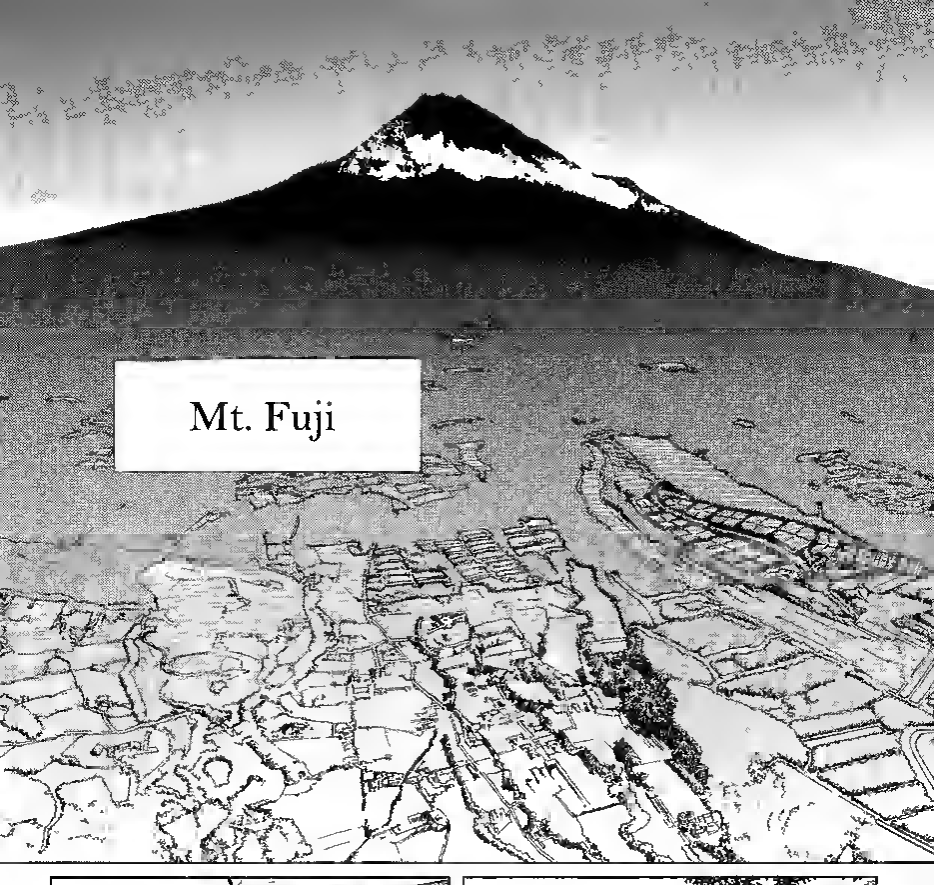

But I've changed since his death...
I wasn't interested in my Father's research, and I was so opposed to inheriting the printing business that I found a job with a computer software company instead.
What's the third condition?
I'll have to explain that later, too...
I'm sorry, I'm talking about my Father's research second-hand, so I have to do this in order so I don't confuse myself
As I was sorting my Father's notes and memos, I began to study them a little. There's still a lot of things I don't know..
But in return, I have this.

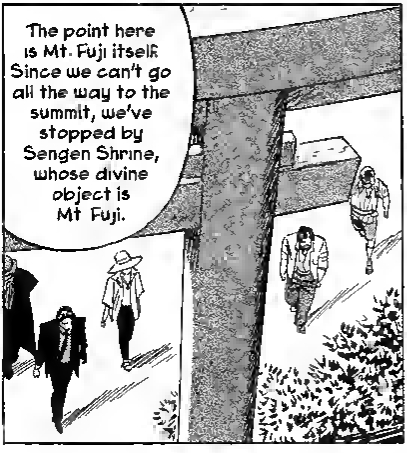
With this, I've been able to calculate all the locations that meet all three conditions, which my Father was unable to...

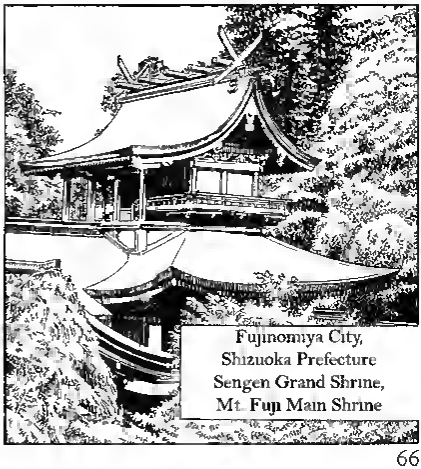
In spite of his age, Tenkai had travelled from Nikko, to Edo, and to Kyoto time and time again. I searched all regions that can be travelled to on foot from these places, and narrowed it down to these seven.
That will be the time when I consider my father's research complete...!
I just want at least one of you to acknowledge it.
As a result, I saw the full picture of Tenkai's spell. I want to let you know of it now.

...Come again?
Daijiro resigned from his job at his firm and used his severance package to fund this tour. This can't just be a memorial of his father's death anniversary.
Lots of people say that while on his deathbed, his last words to his son were, "He'll pay for this!"
Rumor has it that the late Mr. Soma was tormented by threat letters and harassment phone calls over his research on Masakado.
Just a rumor, mind you. That stress may have quickened his death. It was stomach cancer, after all...


It looks like there's more to this tour that meets the eye...
I'm just behind the bus. I'm keeping my distance, just like you instructed.
Beep!

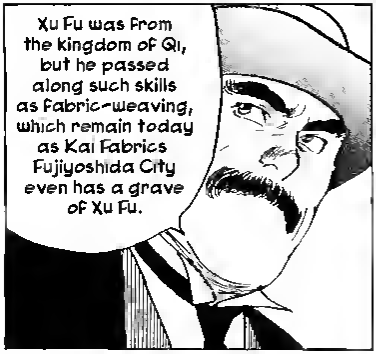



The point here is Mt. Fuji itself. Since we can't go all the way to the summit, we've stopped by Sengen Shrine, whose divine object is Mt. Fuji.



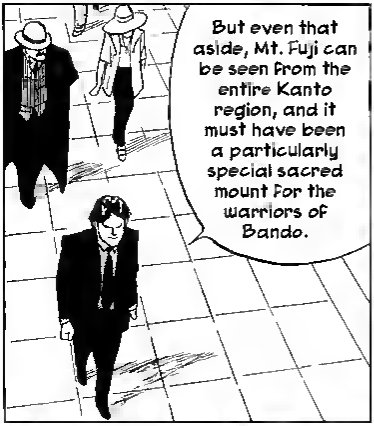
Fujinomiya City,
Shizuoka Prefecture
Sengen Grand Shrine,
Mt. Fuji Main Shrine

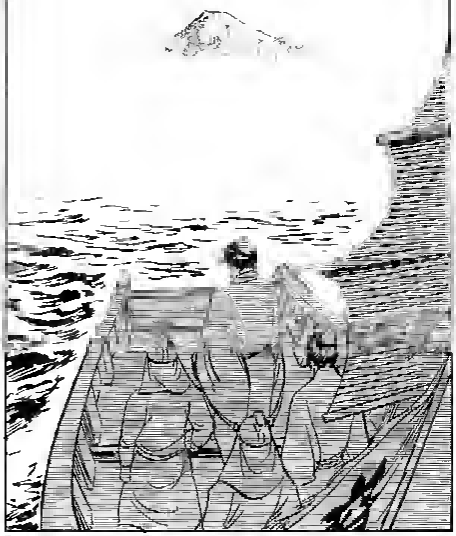
Mt. Fuji is also known by the name of "Mt. Penglai", which refers to Fukurokuju in Japan. Fukurokuju of the Seven Gods of Fortune is regarded as one and the same as Jurojin.
Yaa aaa aaaw n...
Xu Fu?
Mt. Horai... Come to think of it, the Fuji area is famous for the legend of Xu Fu, along with Kumano.
That Penglai he found was Mt. Fuji, and the root word of Fuji is "Fushi", meaning immortality...
Xu Fu was the man who crossed over to Penglai for Qin Shi Huang, in search of the elixir of life...

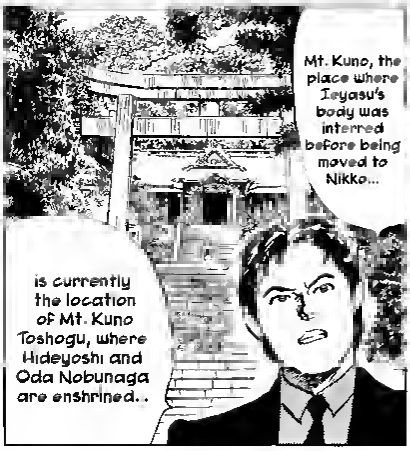

Xu Fu was from the kingdom of Qi, but he passed along such skills as fabric-weaving, which remain today as Kai Fabrics Fujiyoshida City even has a grave of Xu Fu.

-Thus he spake in address to Xu Fu of Qi
There doth be three sacred mounts in the sea, which bear the names Penglai, Fang-zhang, and Yingzhou. Here live the immortals. I charge of thee, purify thyself and set forth into the sea with thousands of men, women, and children, to seek the immortals."

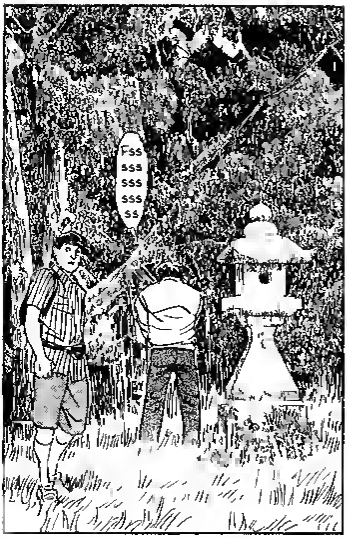
(Records of the Grand Historian: Annals of Qin Shi Huang)


But even that aside, Mt. Fuji can be seen from the entire Kanto region, and it must have been a particularly special sacred mount for the warriors of Bando.




Mt. Kuno, the place where Ieyasu's body was interred before being moved to Nikko...
is currently the location of Mt. Kuno Toshogu, where Hideyoshi and Oda Nobunaga are enshrined..

Furthermore...
Sengen Grand Shrine received donations from such figures as Minamoto-no-Yoritomo, Ashikaga Takauji, and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and the current sanctum was founded by Tokugawa Ieyasu.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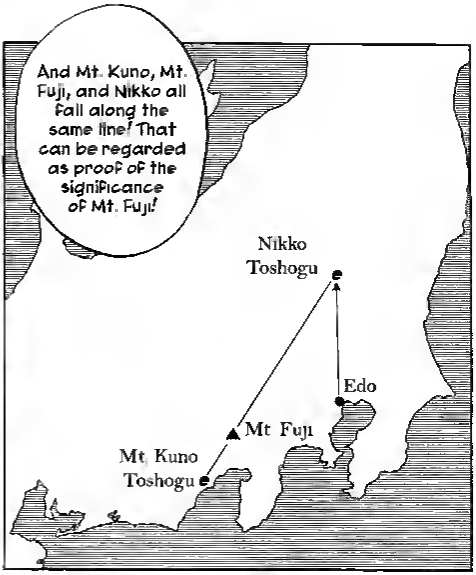
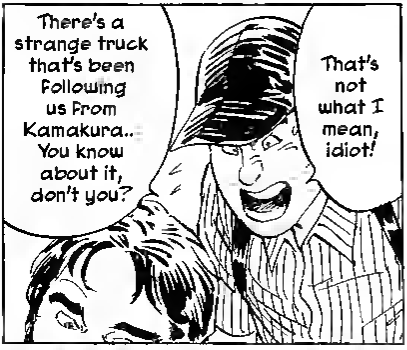

And Mt. Kuno, Mt. Fuji, and Nikko all fall along the same line! That can be regarded as proof of the significance of Mt. Fuji!
Nikko Toshogu
Edo
Mt. Fuji
Mt. Kuno Toshogu


There's a strange truck that's been following us from Kamakura.. You know about it, don't you?
That's not what I mean, idiot!

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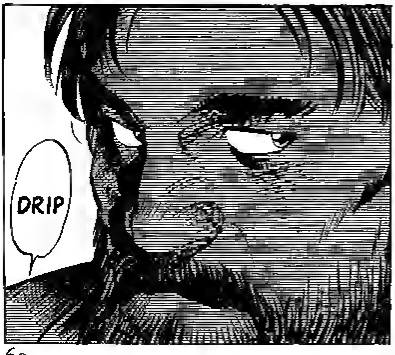
Don't hide it, Mr. Fukutake.
What, you want to see it?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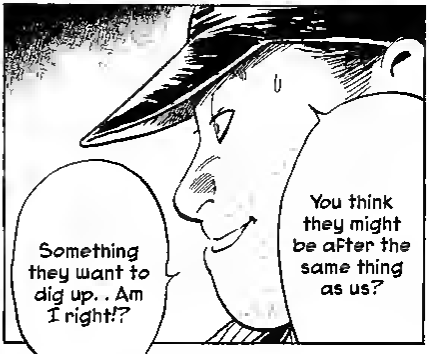
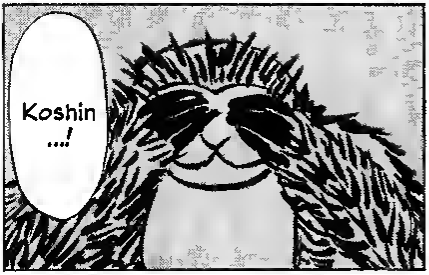
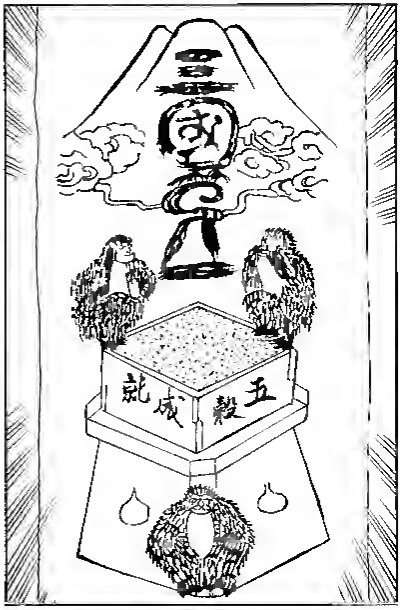
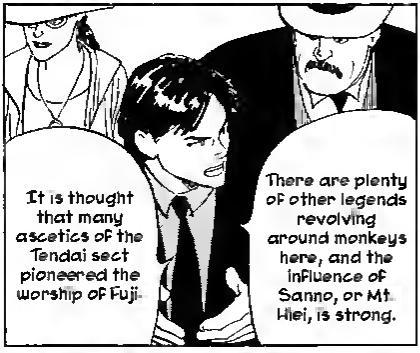
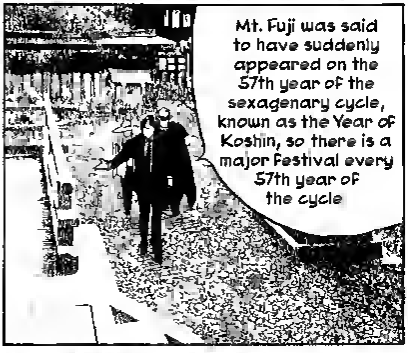

You think they might be after the same thing as us?
Something they want to dig up. . Am I right!?


Koshin ...!

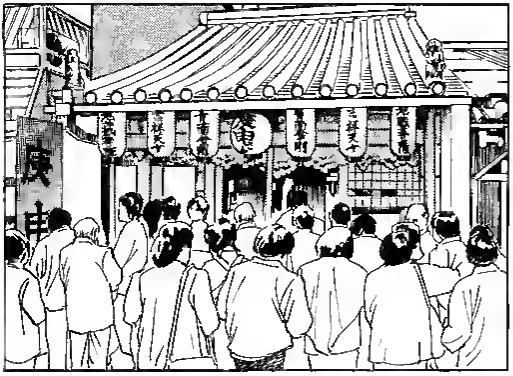

庚申
五穀成就

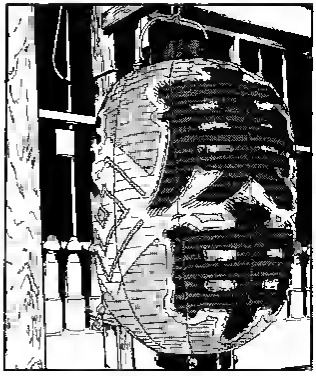

It is thought that many ascetics of the Tendai sect pioneered the worship of Fuji.
There are plenty of other legends revolving around monkeys here, and the influence of Sanno, or Mt. Hiei, is strong.


Mt. Fuji was said to have suddenly appeared on the 57th year of the sexagenary cycle, known as the Year of Koshin, so there is a major festival every 57th year of the cycle

And it was the Tendai priests that spread the faiths of Koshin and the Seven Gods of Fortune in Kanto at the same time...
The Tendai of Mt. Hiei... Needless to say, their head priest during the early Edo period was Tenkai.

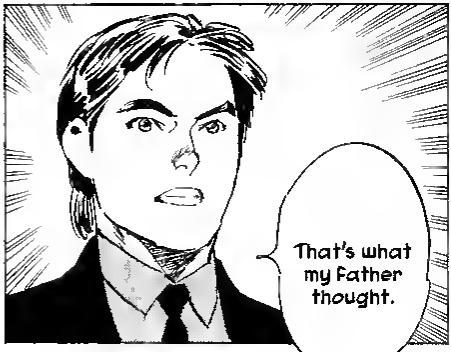
You mean under Tenkai's orders...!?
It's the belief...!
I don't get it. What do Koshin and the Seven Gods of Fortune have to do with any of this...?

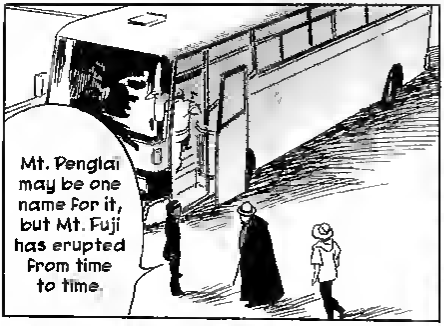


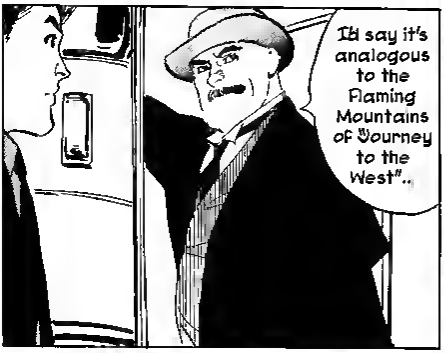


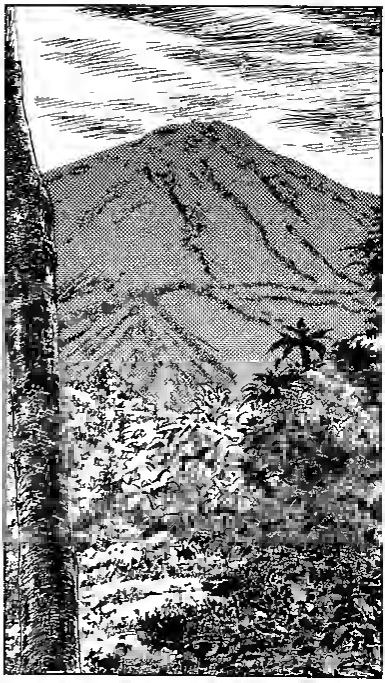
I don't know how big this spell he cast was, but are you saying that he used the piety of the masses to maintain it?

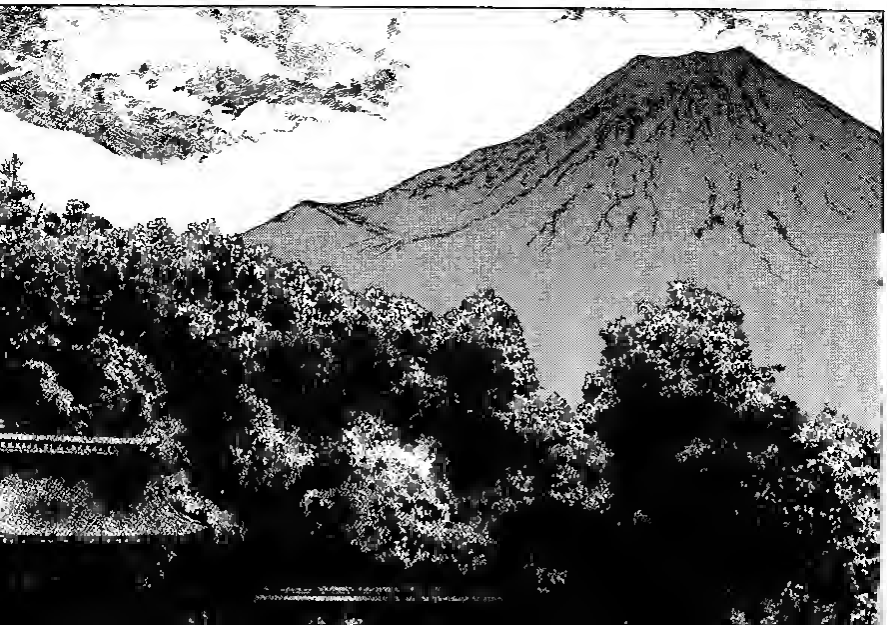
As long as the beliefs exist, the temples and shrines would not be destroyed.
If Tenkai was missing even one of the necessary temples or shrines, his spell would be broken.

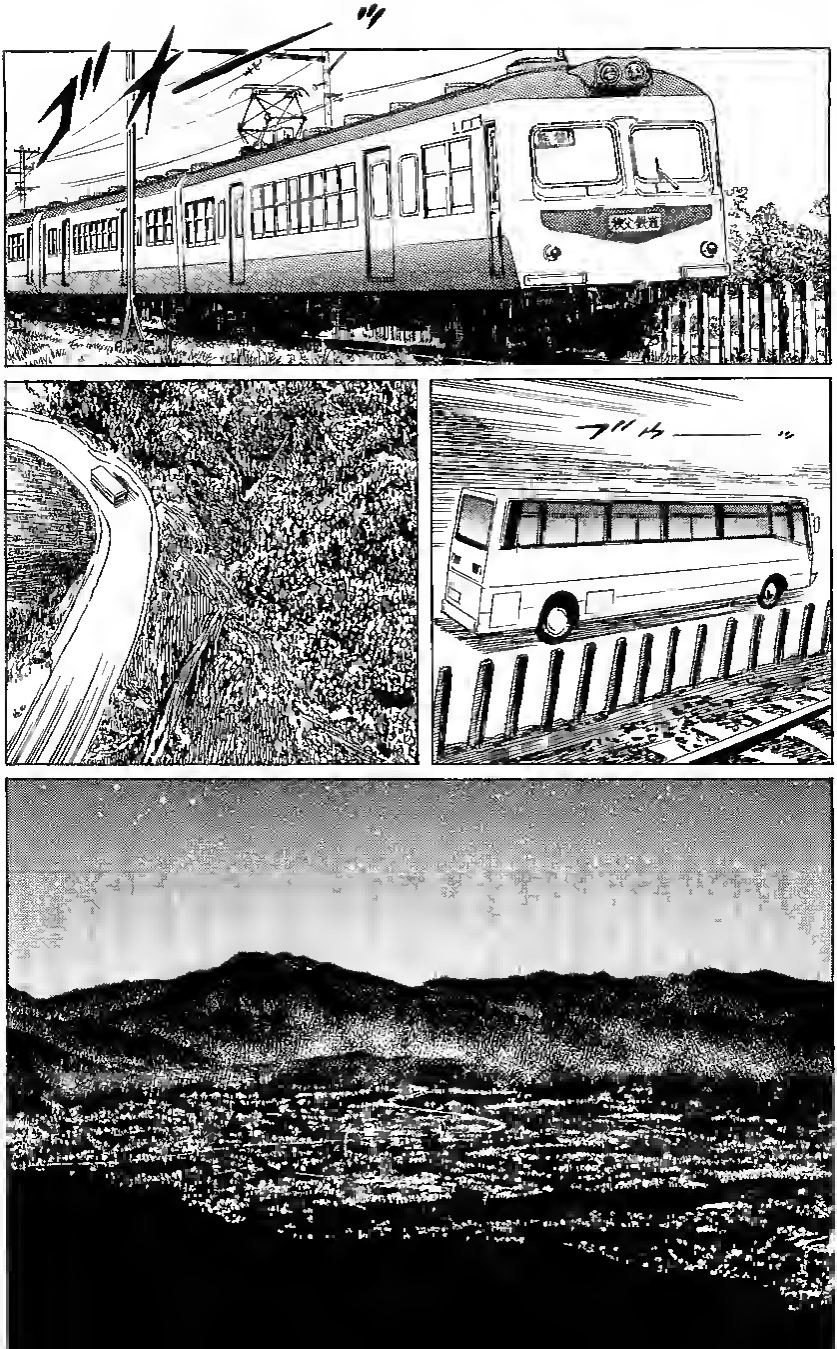

That's what my Father thought.


Mt. Penglai may be one name for it, but Mt. Fuji has erupted from time to time.


I'd say it's analogous to the Flaming Mountains of "Journey to the West"..



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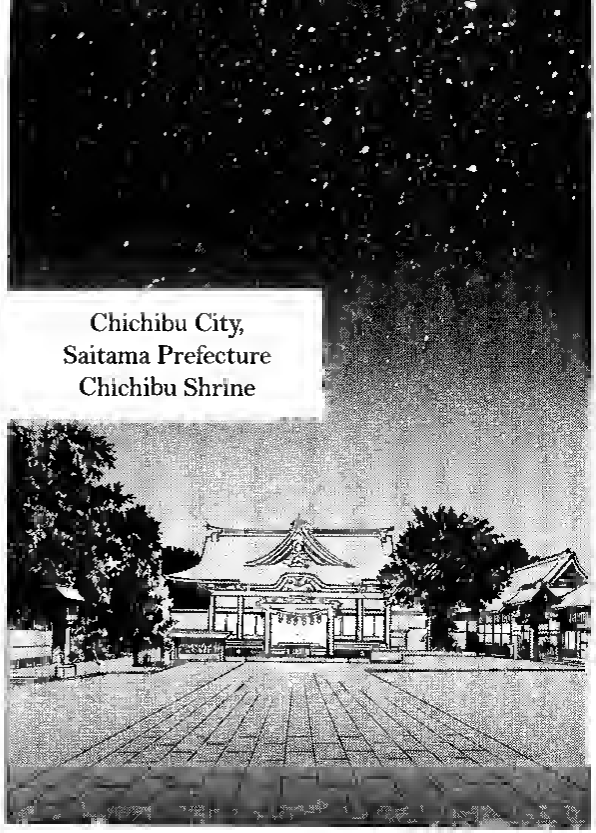
秩父鉄道
ゴォォ――〃

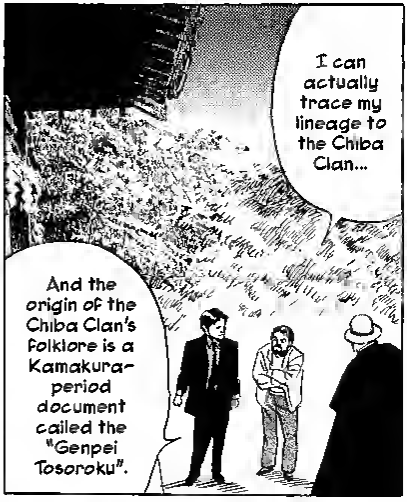
I know this has been a bit of a slog, but I wanted to come here by the end of the day.

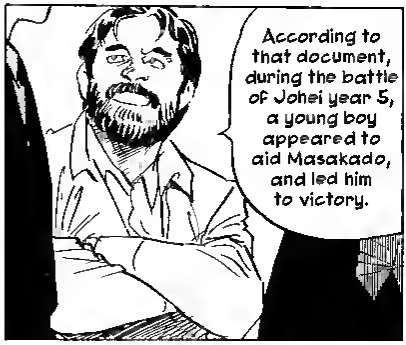

Chichibu City,
Saitama Prefecture
Chichibu Shrine

The Soma Clan happens to be my ancestors, as well...
The Chiba Clan and Soma Clan in particular... Both clans are famous claimants to the lineage of Taira-no-Masakado.

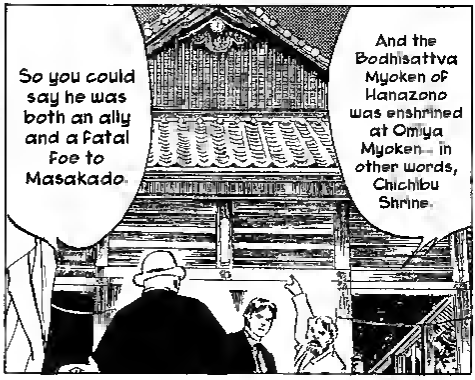
This is Chichibu Shrine, famous for its Night Festival in winter. It was originally called "Omiya Myoken", and was the ancient center of the Taira Clan's Myoken faith.

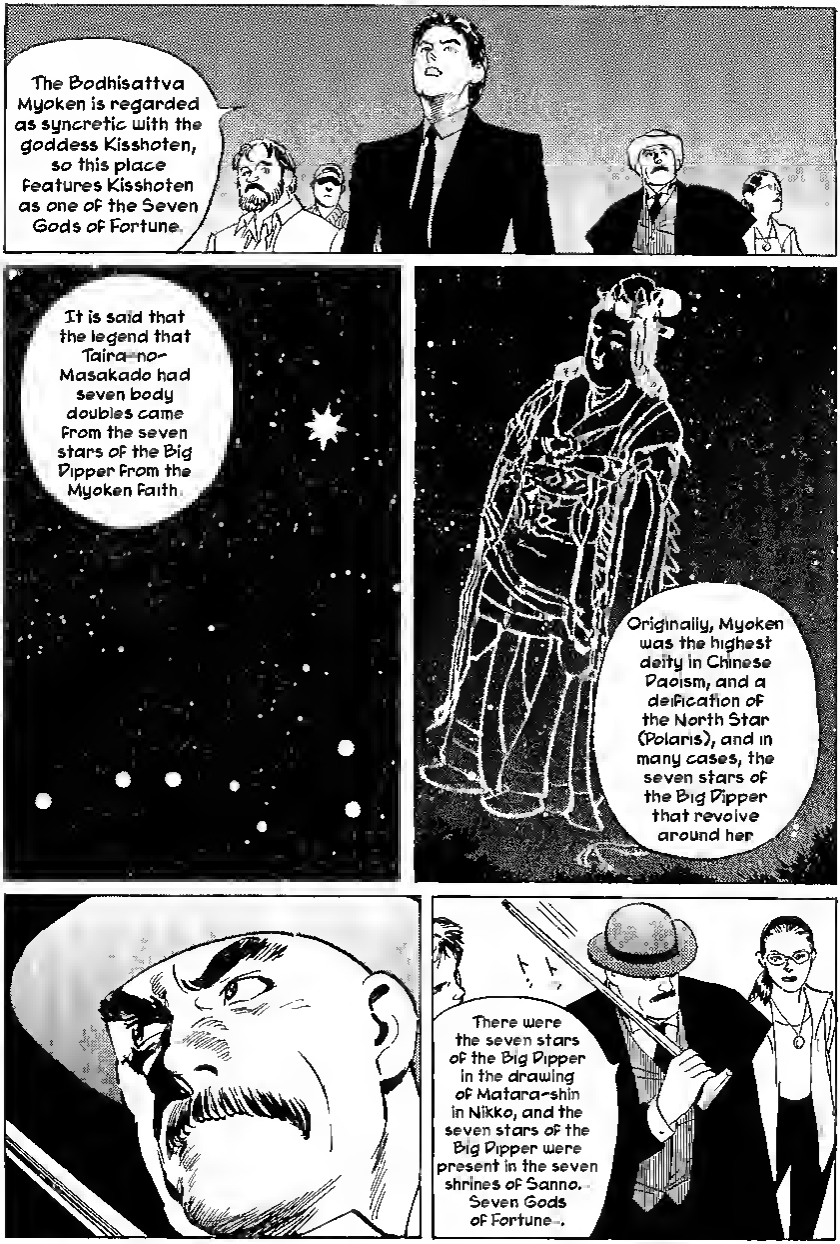
The boy named himself the Bodhisattva Myoken of Hanazono in the province of Kozuke, and promised his protection if he would worship him.
But they say that when Masakado declared himself the New Emperor, Myoken left him and joined his enemies, allowing Masakado's defeat.


I can actually trace my lineage to the Chiba Clan...
And the origin of the Chiba Clan's folklore is a Kamakura-period document called the "Genpei Tosoroku".


According to that document, during the battle of Johei year 5, a young boy appeared to aid Masakado, and led him to victory.

You're well-informed on this... Masakado may have even fought here.


So you could say he was both an ally and a fatal foe to Masakado.
And the Bodhisattva Myoken of Hanazono was enshrined at Omiya Myoken— in other words, Chichibu Shrine.


The Bodhisattva Myoken is regarded as syncretic with the goddess Kisshoten, so this place features Kisshoten as one of the Seven Gods of Fortune.
It is said that the legend that Taira-no-Masakado had seven body doubles came from the seven stars of the Big Dipper from the Myoken Faith.
Originally, Myoken was the highest deity in Chinese Daoism, and a deification of the North Star (Polaris), and in many cases, the seven stars of the Big Dipper that revolve around her
There were the seven stars of the Big Dipper in the drawing of Matara-shin in Nikko, and the seven stars of the Big Dipper were present in the seven shrines of Sanno. Seven Gods of Fortune.

Soma, would I be right in supposing... that the seven shrines we'll be visiting are arranged like the seven stars of the Big Dipper?
I... Impressive, Professor Munakata..!
That's the third condition.
The three remaining locations are in Nagoya, Kyoto, and Osaka...
Nikko Toshogu
Tsurugaoka Hachiman Shrine
Kanda Shrine, Masakado's Mound
Mt. Fuji
Chichibu Shrine
Nagoya
Kyoto
Osaka

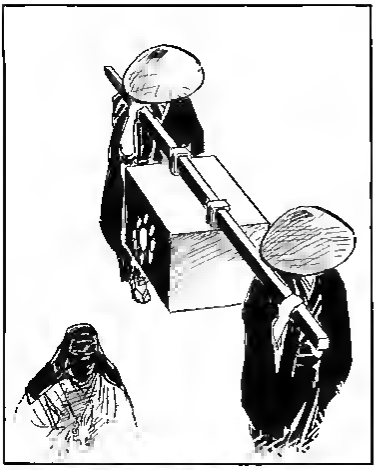
And the location in the position of Polaris is Nikko Toshogu!
Though slightly warped, they form a giant Big Dipper from Kanto to Kansai.
WHAT'S THE CODE? WHERE'S IT BURIED!?
I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THE SPELL!!
And this is where Tenkai's terrible spell...!
Buried gold?
THE GOLD! WHERE IS IEYASU'S BURIED GOLD!?

There's a theory that says that a portion of Ieyasu's vast inheritance was hidden in the Nikko area. Looks like that theory blinded him.
I think Mr. Oguro's got the wrong idea here!
Gahaha-haha!
BECAUSE HE WANTED FUNDS! YOUR FATHER USED HIS CLIENT CONNECTIONS TO BRING HIS RESEARCH OR WHATEVER TO OUR PUBLICATION...
That's preposter-ous! Why did you...?
What if all this about Masakado and Koshin is just a code, and the seven locations contain a hint to its hiding place!
You may not have noticed yet, Mr. Soma, but you don't suppose that Tenkai had buried treasure somewhere?
N.. No, I was just wondering if I could be published in your magazine..

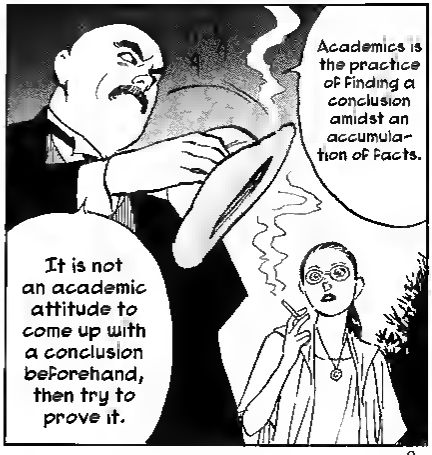
But now you've inherited this from your father!
That was the last I heard from him. I tried phoning him several times, and may have said some harsh words.
But I didn't think he was dead...
...So you were one of the people who harassed my father.
THERE MUST BE SOME REASON YOU'RE SO DESPERATE TO FIGURE THIS OUT! THAT'S WHY I'VE FOLLOWED YOU THIS FAR!
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH YOUR STUPID NOISES AFFECTED MY FATHER ON HIS DEATHBED...!?
!

Leave now. If it's buried treasure you want, you'd better start digging.
WHAT THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH YOU ALL!?
HUH...?
I'M TAKING A CAB BACK TO TOKYO! AND I'LL BE SENDING YOU THE BILL!
.....

Whether for better or for worse, I'm finding myself interested in this Tenkai figure, Professor Munakata...
Planning the city of Edo, constructing Nikko, building the Shogunate's foundation...
Not many people in Japanese history have designed and enacted such major undertakings.

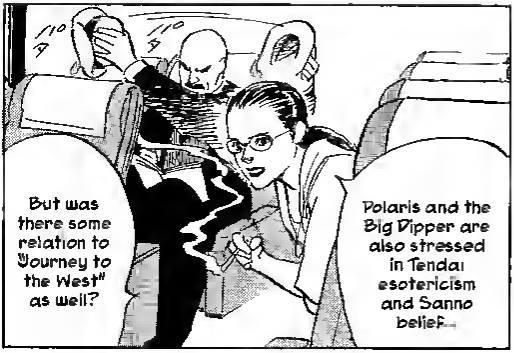


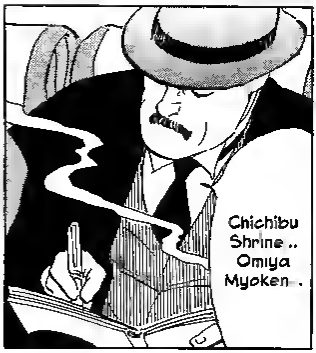
I did give him token acknowledgment.
but I did not bother speaking to Mr. Soma further three years ago for that very reason

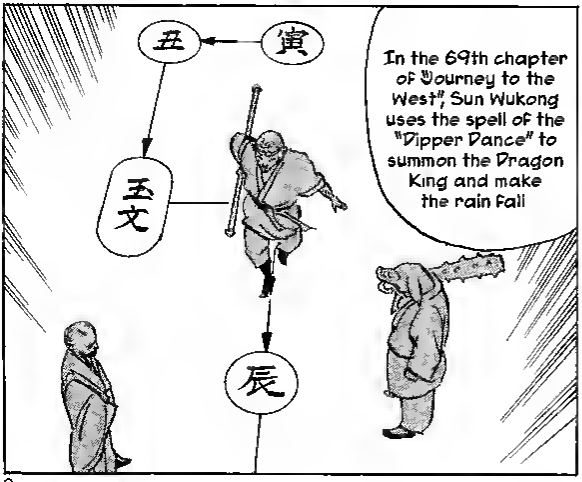

Academics is the practice of finding a conclusion amidst an accumulation of facts.
It is not an academic attitude to come up with a conclusion beforehand, then try to prove it.

Whether Masakado or Tenkai, the people of the past truly lived with such unbelievably great ambitions...
But I wonder why we still followed him all the way out here..
I received a letter from him as well, but I ignored half of it.
N...NO! HELP...
WAAAAAA AAAUGH!

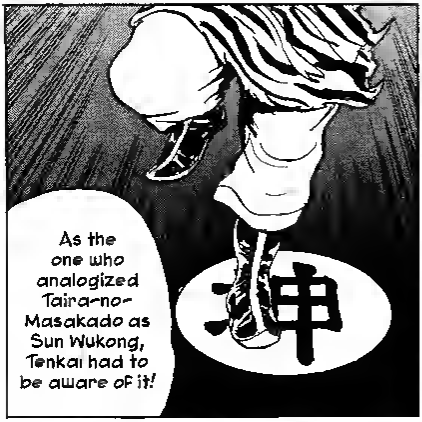
I know you are all tired, but in order to save time, you will have to rest in the bus as we drive.
My apologies for that incident
We will reach Nagoya by morning, and Osaka by night, at which point we will be Finished.

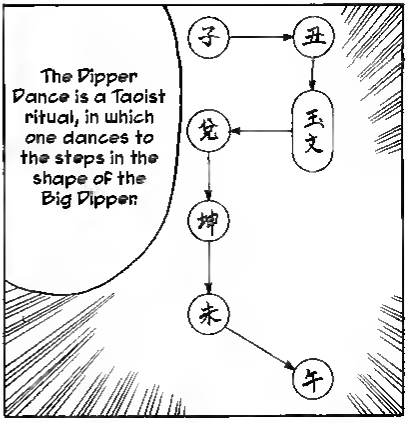

But was there some relation to "Journey to the West" as well?
Polaris and the Big Dipper are also stressed in Tendai esotericism and Sanno belief...

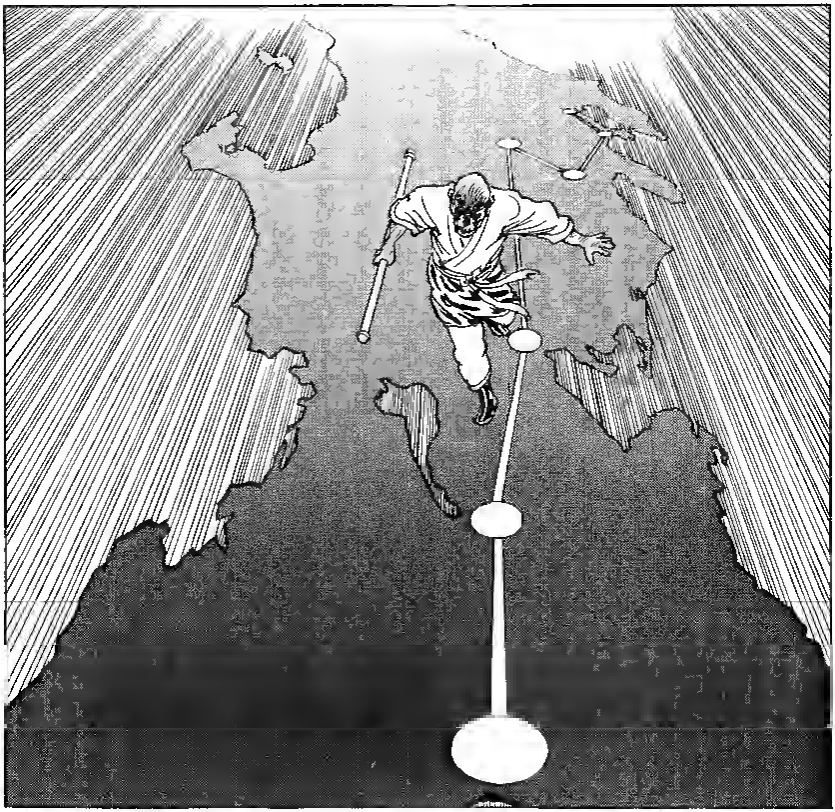

Chichibu Shrine .. Omiya Myoken...


丑
寅
五文
辰
In the 69th chapter of "Journey to the West", Sun Wukong uses the spell of the "Dipper Dance" to summon the Dragon King and make the rain fall

Do you know of the "Dipper dance"?


As the one who analogized Taira-no-Masakado as Sun Wukong, Tenkai had to be aware of it!
坤

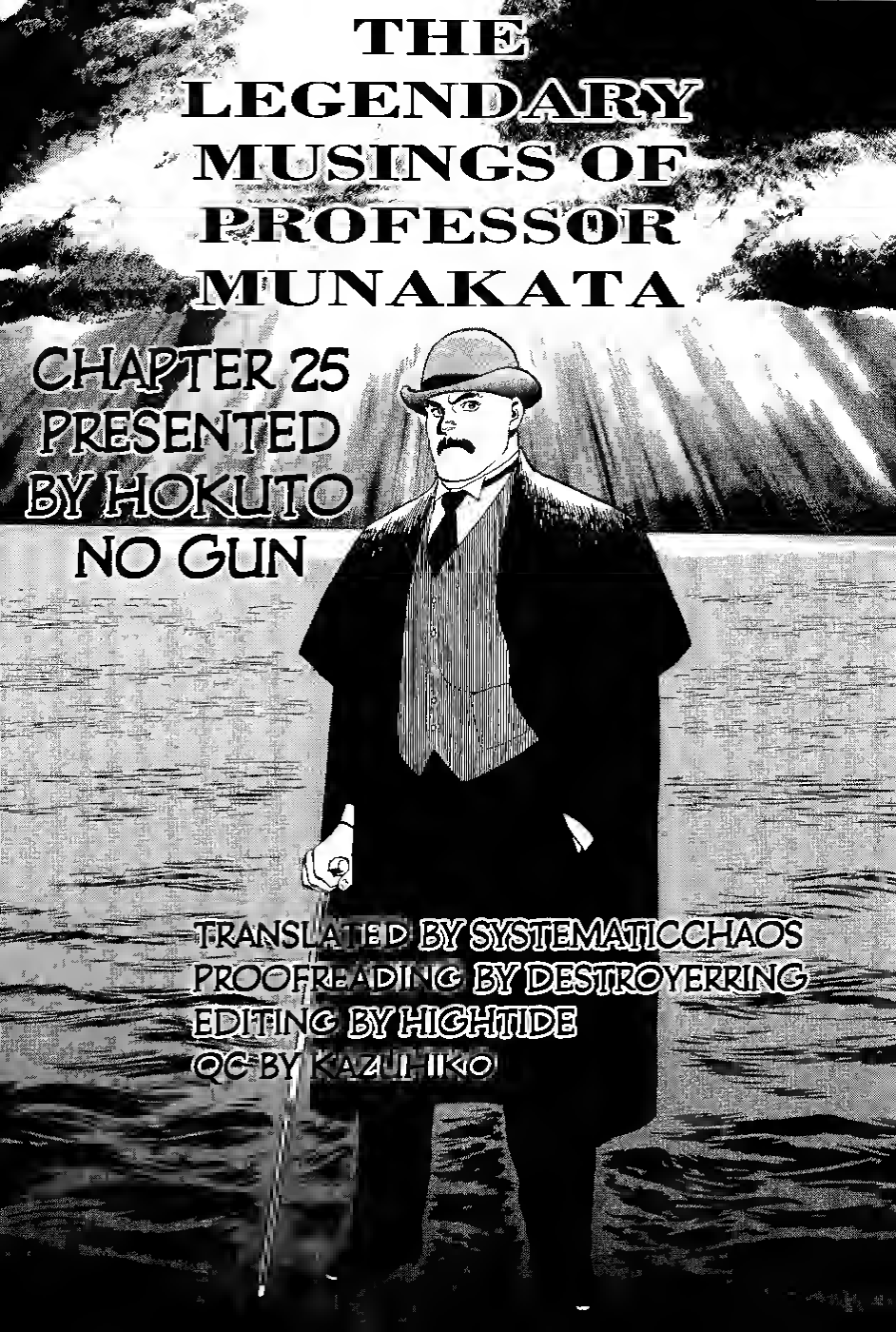

The Dipper Dance is a Taoist ritual, in which one dances to the steps in the shape of the Big Dipper.
子
丑
玉文
兌
坤
未
午



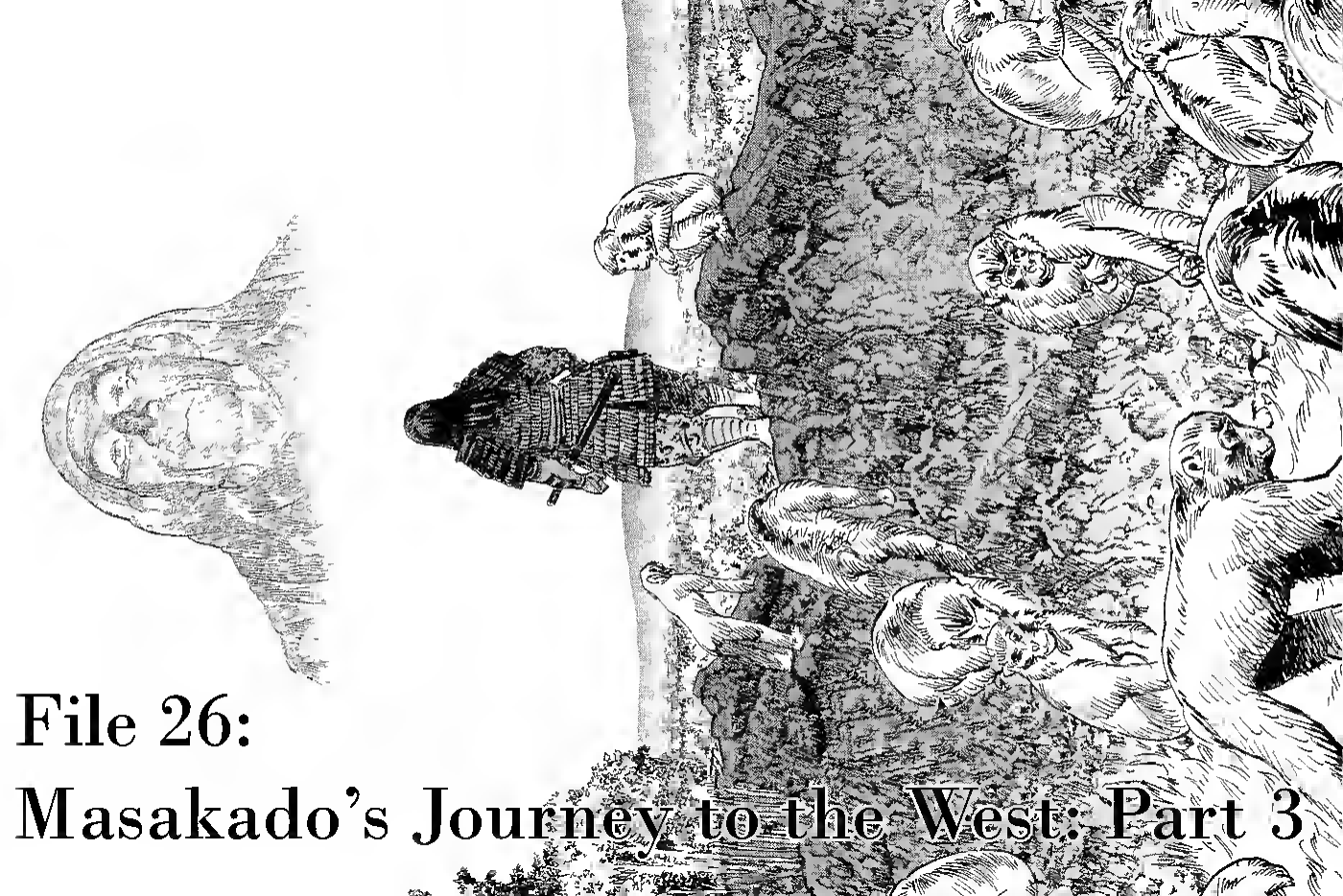
THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 25

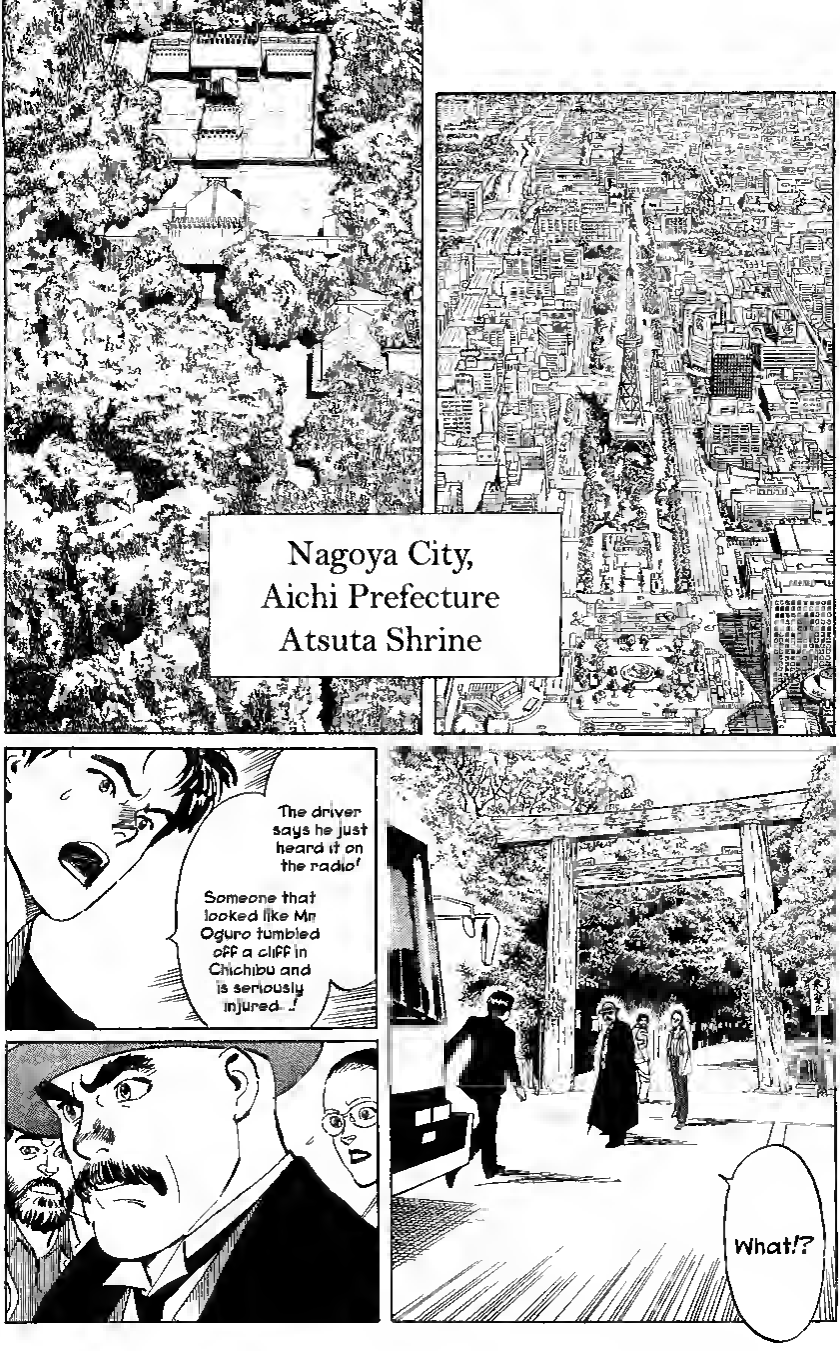
PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN



TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFREADING BY DESTROYERRING
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO



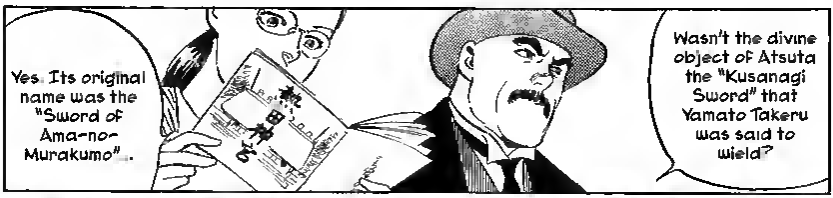
File 26:
Masakado's Journey to the West: Part 3


Nagoya City,
Aichi Prefecture
Atsuta Shrine
The driver says he just heard it on the radio!
Someone that looked like Mr Oguro tumbled off a cliff in Chichibu and is seriously injured...!
What!?

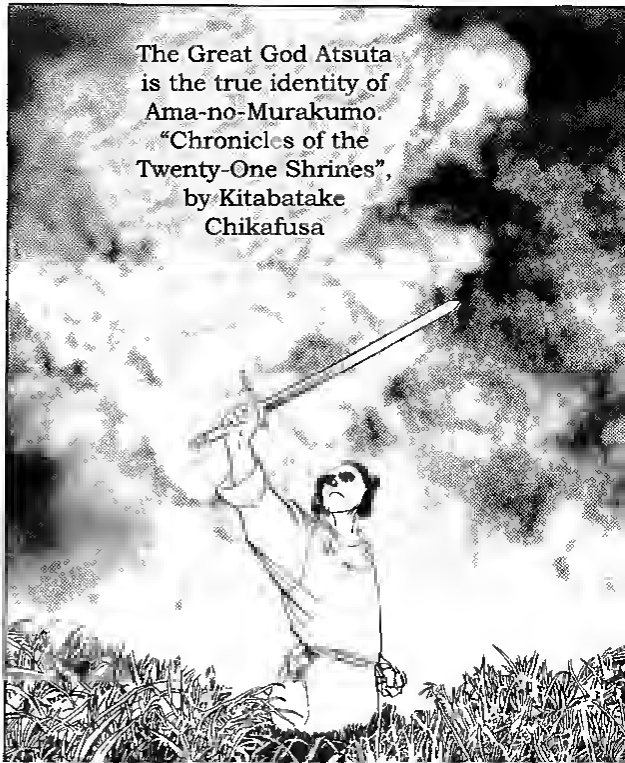
I'm sorry that this had to happen...
I intend to catch up to you by evening.
Got it. We can handle things here, so go on.
As this was my responsibility, and the police will be looking into it, I will be returning to Chichibu.
.....
That's two injured... I guess that Masakado's charm didn't work after all...

Oh, right. I'm pretty sure this is the famous Nobunaga's Wall...
Sorry, but I'm feeling sick to my stomach... I'd better hang back and rest, so as not to offend the god Atsuta.
Hmm... Oda Nobunaga prayed for victory to Atsuta before the Battle of Okehazama, then contributed this earthen wall out of gratitude...
Well, that's surprising.
I had the image of Nobunaga not fearing any gods or buddhas, after his burning of Mt. Hiei, but even he had a shrine attached to him..

He was the conqueror of the Warring States that almost managed to unite the nation before falling at Honno Temple, right?
He's also enshrined in Mt Kuno's Toshogu, and I suppose he'd provide the necessary spiritual power for Tenkai's spell.
...It's probably this.
Setting Nobunaga aside, what about the Seven Gods of Fortune?
Hang on I'll go check.
The "First Ebisu" Festival on January 5th!
It's a grand ceremony in which hundreds of thousands of people flock to its auxiliary shrine of Kamichikama, to receive amulets of Ebisu and Daikoku.

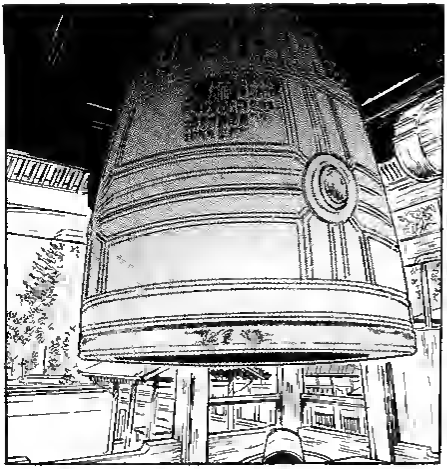

Yes. Its original name was the "Sword of Ama-no-Murakumo".
Wasn't the divine object of Atsuta the "Kusanagi Sword" that Yamato Takeru was said to wield?

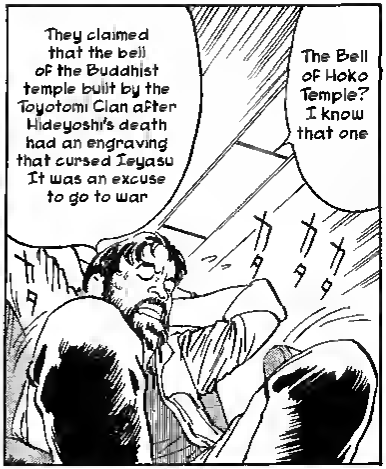
Ama-no-Mura-kumo.

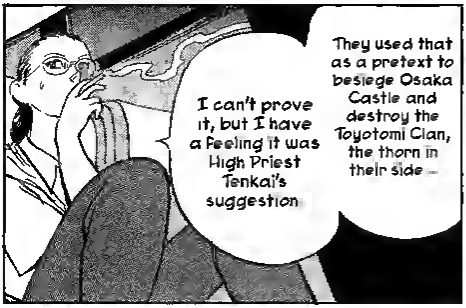

The Great God Atsuta is the true identity of Ama-no-Murakumo. "Chronicles of the Twenty-One Shrines", by Kitabatake Chikafusa

.....
ゴゥ
ゴゥ
ゴゥ

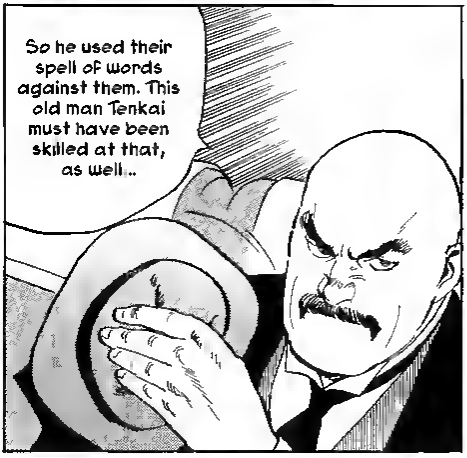
Taira-no-Masakado, Minamoto-no-Yoritomo, Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Tokugawa Ieyasu ..!
Shitenno Temple isn't that far from Osaka Castle.. which was Toyotomi Hideyoshi's castle until it was burned down in the Siege of Osaka
Speaking of Kyoto in terms of Hideyoshi and Ieyasu, I believe the bell that set off the Siege of Osaka is still here

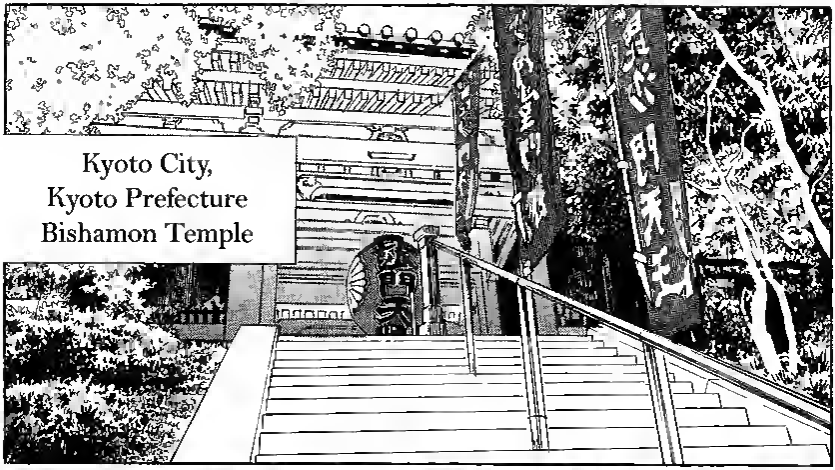


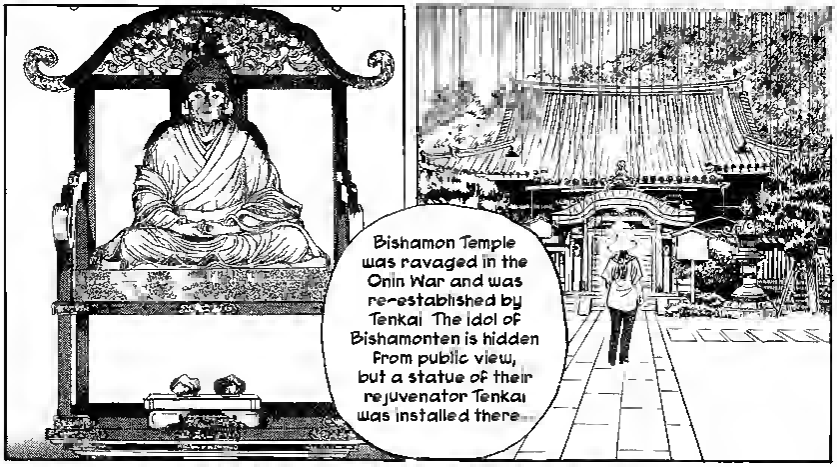

The Bell of Hoko Temple? I know that one
They claimed that the bell of the Buddhist temple built by the Toyotomi Clan after Hideyoshi's death had an engraving that cursed Ieyasu It was an excuse to go to war
カタ
カタ
カタ


They used that as a pretext to besiege Osaka Castle and destroy the Toyotomi Clan, the thorn in their side –
I can't prove it, but I have a feeling it was High Priest Tenkai's suggestion

幾者
豊楽
國家安康
殷富
"Peace and tranquility, in nation and household" They claimed that this contained a curse by dividing the characters "Ie" and "yasu" with the character for "peace"!


So he used their spell of words against them. This old man Tenkai must have been skilled at that, as well...

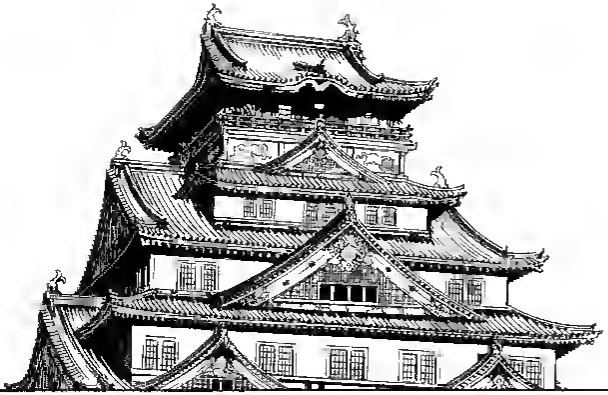

Kyoto City,
Kyoto Prefecture
Bishamon Temple

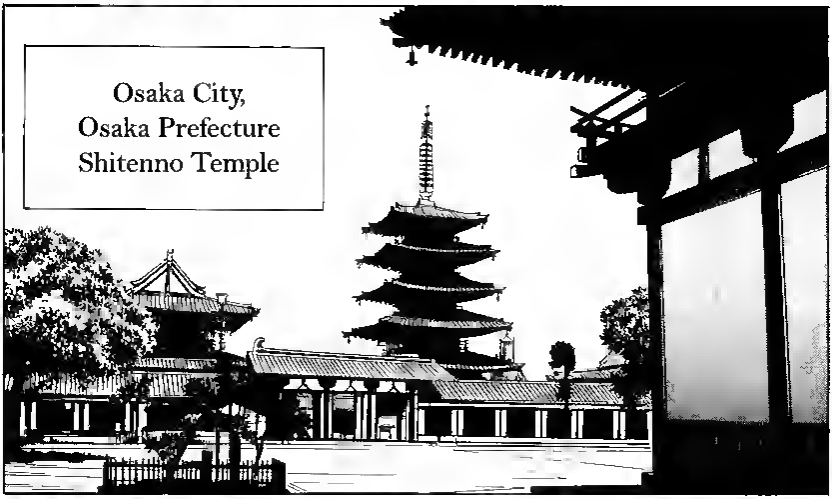

Bishamon Temple was ravaged in the Onin War and was re-established by Tenkai. The idol of Bishamonten is hidden from public view, but a statue of their rejuvenator Tenkai was installed there...

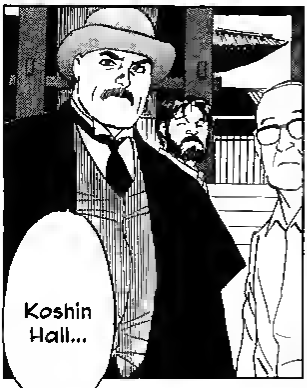
This was a Tendai study sponsored by Tenkai... and Bishamonten was a god of war worshipped by the samurai.
I feel it's more minor compared to the powerful shrines we've visited so far.
You're right...

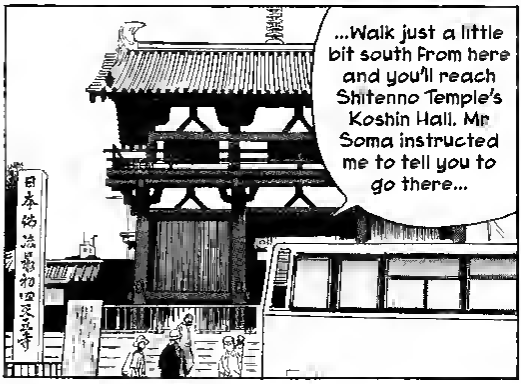
This place... I'm not talking about the bell, but it may be a "severing" spell...
It ought to be meaningful just based on the fact that Tenkai himself was involved in the restoration.
Who cares about that? It's starting to rain, so let's just get to our final destination!
For instance, if you want to negate something, the simplest spell is to draw a line through it, right?
The first thing he would have to do is negate Kyoto, which had been the capital for a millennium.
I'm guessing that Tenkai's goals were to make Edo the capital, and to solidify the Tokugawa administration.
I see...

He made Bishamon Temple the sixth star, purposefully severing Kyoto with the handle of the Big Dipper.
Then the constellation centered on Nikko, or Polaris, takes the form of negating and trampling Kyoto!
. Yes! And what if that wasn't just Kyoto but the Imperial Court... the "Heavenly Emperor", in other words...?

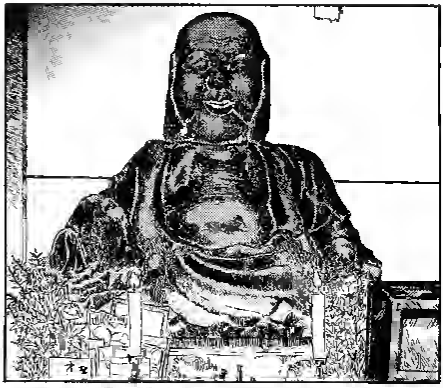



Osaka City,
Osaka Prefecture
Shitenno Temple

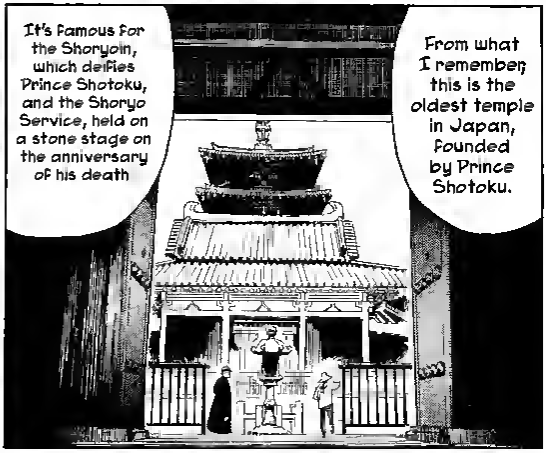

Koshin Hall...

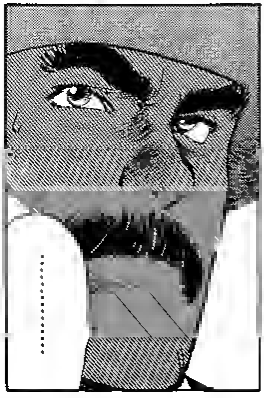

...Walk just a little bit south from here and you'll reach Shitenno Temple's Koshin Hall. Mr Soma instructed me to tell you to go there...

Here's Hotei, just as we expected.



東之門
聖霊院
(太子殿)


It's famous for the Shoryoin, which deifies Prince Shotoku, and the Shoryo Service, held on a stone stage on the anniversary of his death
From what I remember, this is the oldest temple in Japan, founded by Prince Shotoku.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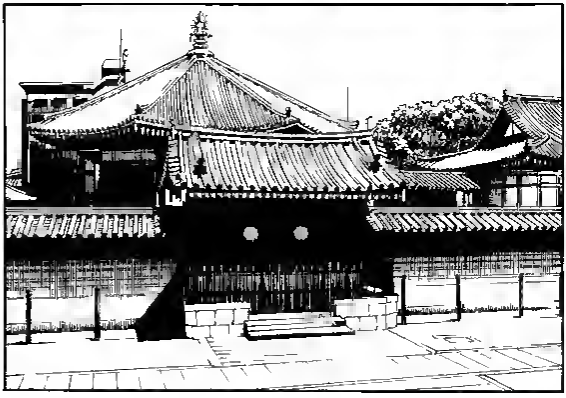


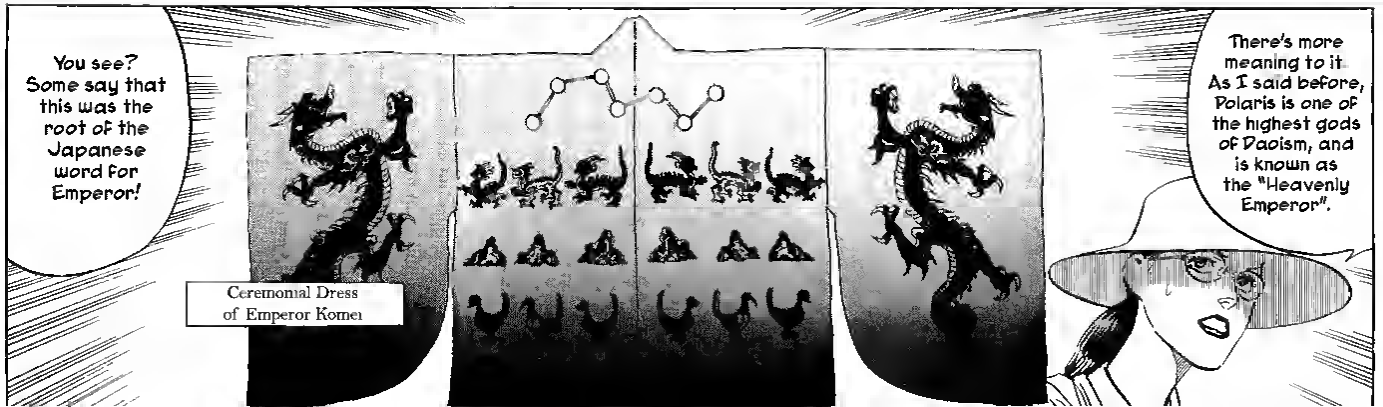
We haven't seen Koshin Hall yet. That seems to be a part of Shitenno Temple...
This was within the territory of Osaka Castle, belonging to Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who is enshrined at Nikko, plus it's a Tendai temple. It's perfect. This completes the Big Dipper formation.

Hmm...
The First Koshin Hall in the nation... This must have been the origin of the Koshin Faith.
The Koshin Faith originated with Chinese Daoism. They believed that there was a worm within the human body that would escape on the 57th night of the sexagenary cycle, and report that person's sins to the Heavenly Emperor.
庚申さん
Since their lifespans would be decreased based on that report, people would stay awake during the 57th night to ensure that the worm does not escape.

So everything points to the Big Dipper...
Oh, look. They're all collected right here...
But this actually connects to the Myoken Faith.
The Heavenly Emperor is connected to Polaris, and the god that determines people's lifespans based on their sins is the Shimeishin - The Big Dipper.
SIGN: STONE STATUES OF THE SEVEN GODS OF FORTUNE
Now let's recap
As this was a spell that had to be kept an utmost secret, no one would be left to succeed Tenkai after his death. But as long as the ignorant masses would continue to pray, the spell's system would last forever!
The Koshin Faith, the Myoken Faith, the Seven Gods of Fortune Faith... Tenkai used the energy from these folk beliefs in order to maintain the Big Dipper formation.

KANDA SHRINE
And that's not all.
He chose seven stead-fast locations with strong spiritual power!
TSURUGAOKA HACHIMAN SHRINE
Minamoto-no-Yoritomo, Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi The spiritual powers of all the conquerors who ruled the nation were united by Taira-no-Masakado!
TSURUGAOKA
CHICHIBU SHRINE
The Sacred Mount Fuji, the Bodhisattva Myoken, and Bishamonten added to that!
MT. FUJI

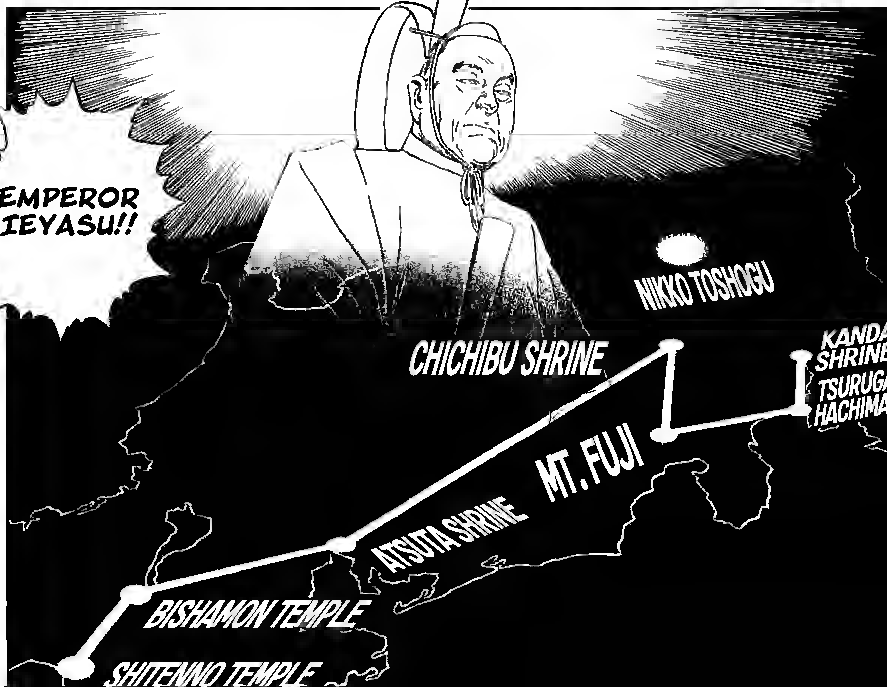
And at the center of the Big Dipper is Polaris... Tokugawa Ieyasu of Nikko!
This was a formation for the greatest spell in Japanese history...!
CHICHIBU SHRINE
BISHAMON TEMPLE
ATSUTA SHRINE
SHITENNO TEMPLE
MT. FUJI
KANDA SHRINE
TSURUGAOKA HACHIMAN SHRINE

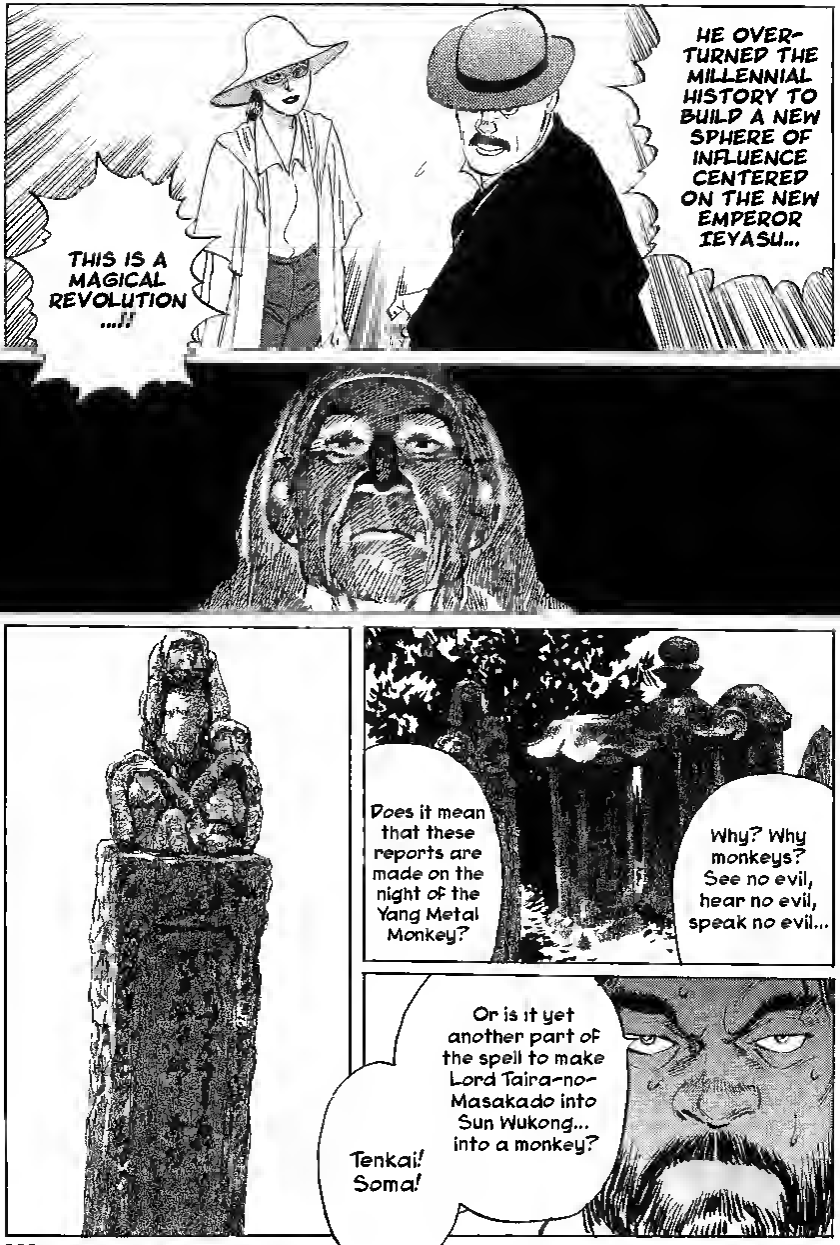

You see? Some say that this was the root of the Japanese word for Emperor!
There's more meaning to it. As I said before, Polaris is one of the highest gods of Daoism, and is known as the "Heavenly Emperor".

Ceremonial Dress of Emperor Komei

The Emperor is Polaris, too!
So positioning Tokugawa Ieyasu as Polaris makes him...
Come to think of it, the Imperial ancestor Amaterasu, worshipped at Ise Shrine, is regarded as syncretic with Taiyi, which is another name for the Heavenly Emperor!

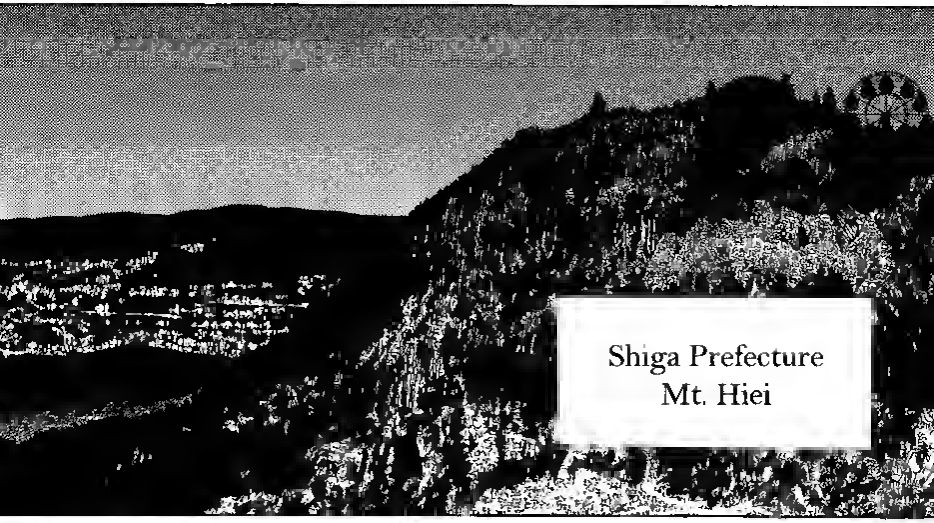
Ise Shrine Auxiliary, Izawa-no-Miya, Rice Planting Festival

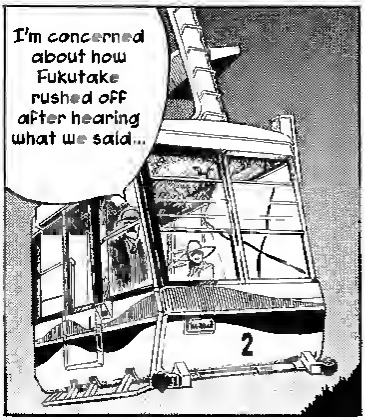


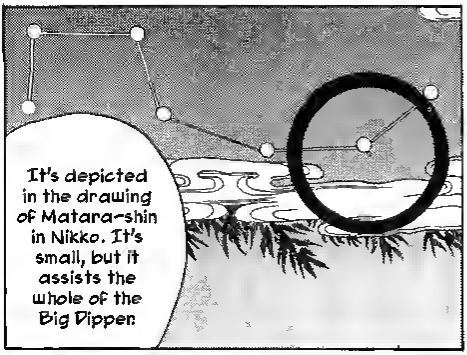

HE OVER-TURNED THE MILLENNIAL HISTORY TO BUILD A NEW SPHERE OF INFLUENCE CENTERED ON THE NEW EMPEROR IEYASU...
THIS IS A MAGICAL REVOLUTION ...!!
Does it mean that these reports are made on the night of the Yang Metal Monkey?
Why? Why monkeys? See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil...
Or is it yet another part of the spell to make Lord Taira-no-Masakado into Sun Wukong... into a monkey?
Tenkai! Soma!

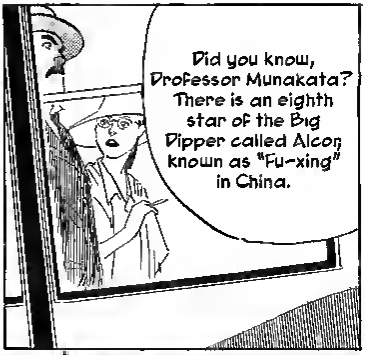
If Tenkai had been travelling with Masakado's head to this point, it ought to be buried somewhere...
I'm sure the folklorist and the religious scholar have a guess as to where it could be?
Head?
India!?
.....
Sun Wukong's destination would have been "India".
There's been a location that's come up in our discussion time and time again, which isn't a part of the Big Dipper formation.
A sacred ground from where Buddhism originated, much like India...
It wouldn't be anywhere near Shitenno Temple. Osaka is Hideyoshi's sacred ground. He would not coexist with Masakado.
If you think about it...

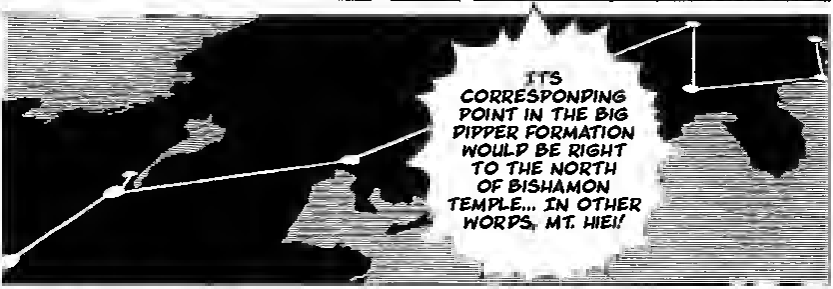
W...WHERE IS THAT...!?

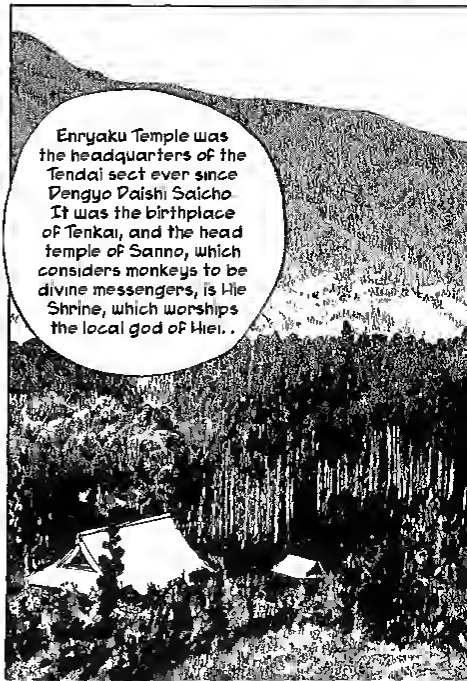

Shiga Prefecture
Mt. Hiei

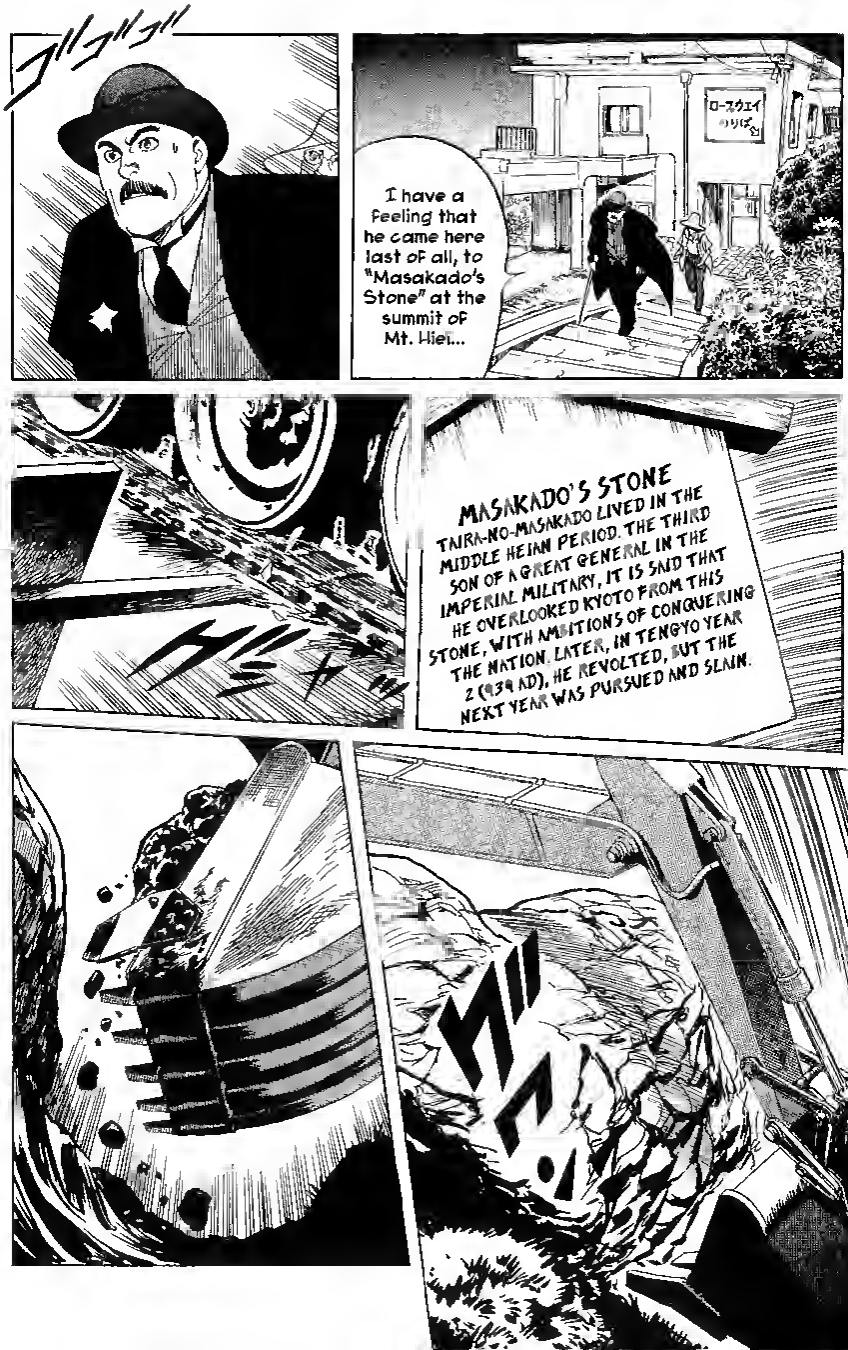

I'm concerned about how Fukutake rushed off after hearing what we said...
2


It's depicted in the drawing of Matara-shin in Nikko. It's small, but it assists the whole of the Big Dipper.


Did you know, Professor Munakata? There is an eighth star of the Big Dipper called Alcor, known as "Fu-xing" in China.


ITS CORRESPONDING POINT IN THE BIG DIPPER FORMATION WOULD BE RIGHT TO THE NORTH OF BISHAMON TEMPLE... IN OTHER WORDS, MT. HIEI!

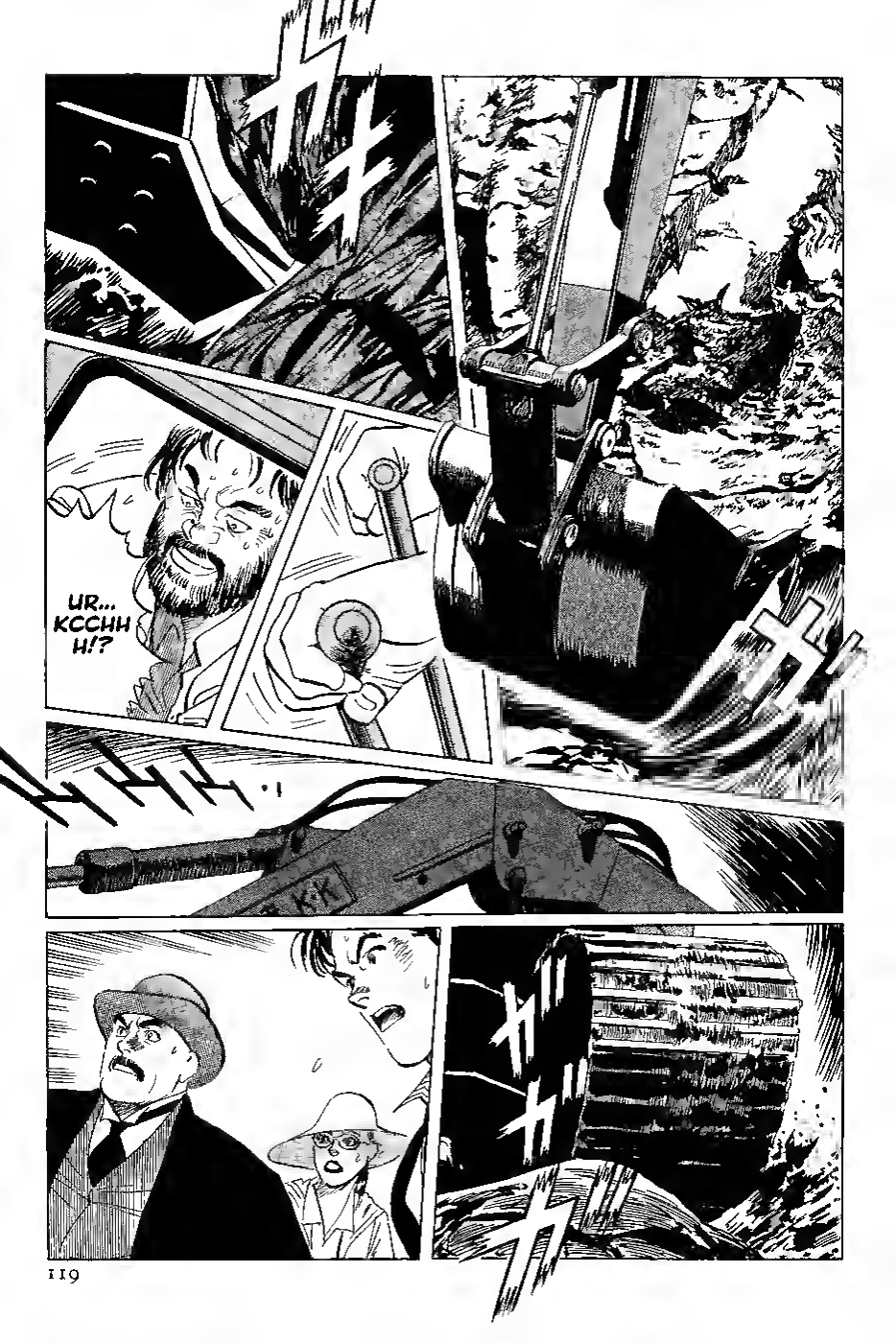

Enryaku Temple was the headquarters of the Tendai sect ever since Dengyo Daishi Saicho. It was the birthplace of Tenkai, and the head temple of Sanno, which considers monkeys to be divine messengers, is Hie Shrine, which worships the local god of Hiei. .


I have a feeling that he came here last of all, to "Masakado's Stone" at the summit of Mt. Hiei...
MASAKADO'S STONE
TAIRA-NO-MASAKADO LIVED IN THE MIDDLE HEIAN PERIOD. THE THIRD SON OF A GREAT GENERAL IN THE IMPERIAL MILITARY, IT IS SAID THAT HE OVERLOOKED KYOTO FROM THIS STONE, WITH AMBITIONS OF CONQUERING THE NATION. LATER, IN TENGYO YEAR 2 (939 AD), HE REVOLTED, BUT THE NEXT YEAR WAS PURSUED AND SLAIN.

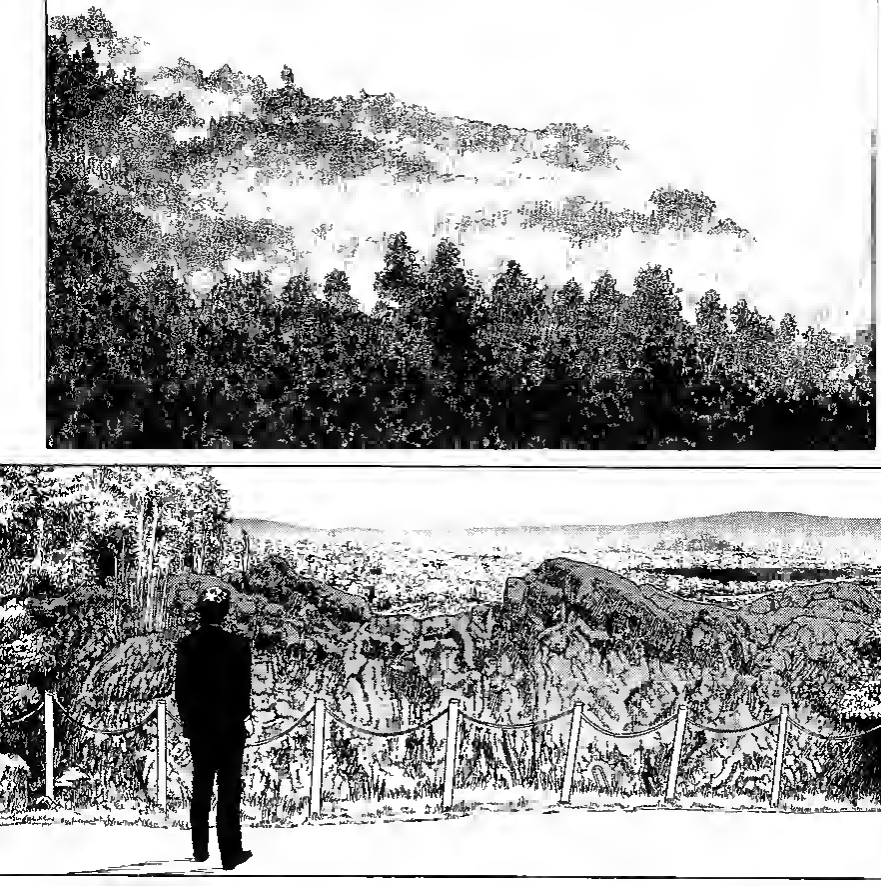
W...WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?
STAY BACK! I MUST BRING THE HEAD OF LORD MASAKADO BACK TO KANTO!
Fukutake Construction
HE WAS NO TRAINED MONKEY! HOW DARE ANYONE DRAG AROUND TAIRA-NO-MASAKADO, THE GREATEST LOCAL SPIRIT IN ALL OF KANTO, TO DO THEIR OWN BIDDING, AND LEAVE IT HERE...
HE IS THE HERO OF THE CHIBA CLAN!!

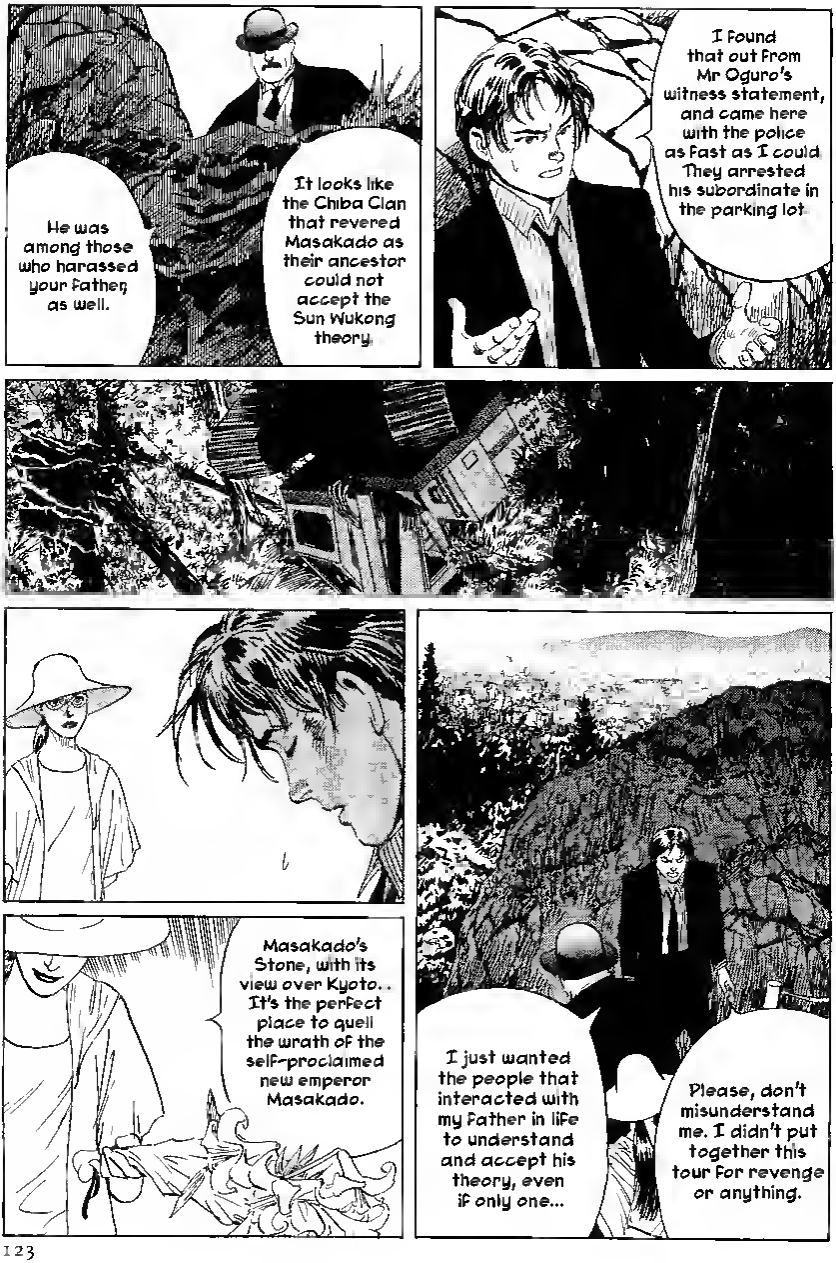
MR. FUKUTAKE! NO!
ゴゴゴゴ

MR. FUKUTAKE! NO!
ゴゴゴゴ


UR...
KCCHH
H!?

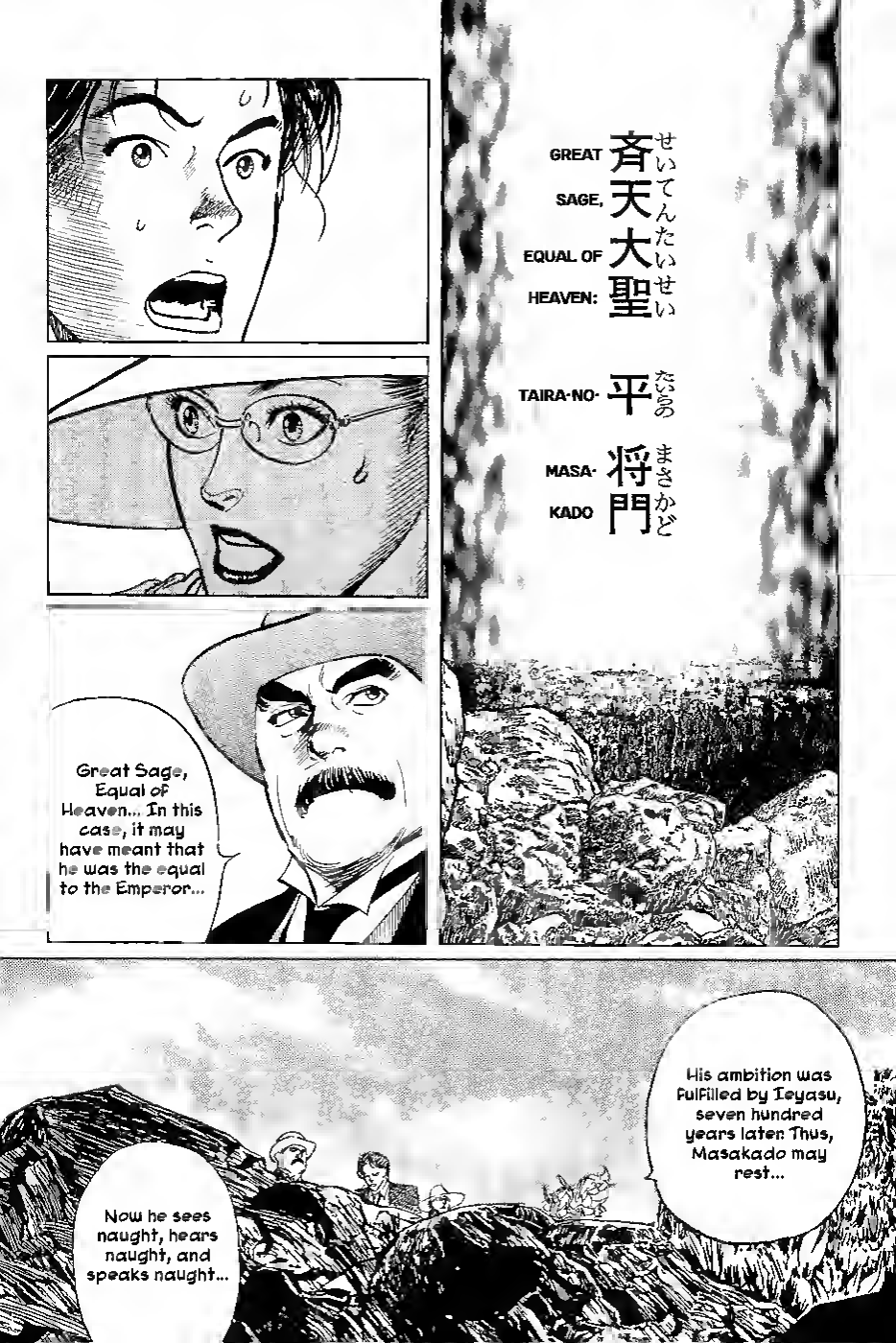
WAAA
AAAA
AAAA
UUUU
UUUU
GGGG
HHHH
HHHH
HH!!


When Mr. Oguro started to notice it, he had that subordinate do it to threaten him and seal his lips.
No. It looks like Mr. Fukutake had one of his subordinates from his contracting business follow us by truck.
Was it Fukutake that pushed Oguro off the hill last night?


He was among those who harassed your father, as well.
It looks like the Chiba Clan that revered Masakado as their ancestor could not accept the Sun Wukong theory.
I found that out from Mr Oguro's witness statement, and came here with the police as fast as I could. They arrested his subordinate in the parking lot.
Masakado's Stone, with its view over Kyoto... It's the perfect place to quell the wrath of the self-proclaimed new emperor Masakado.
I just wanted the people that interacted with my father in life to understand and accept his theory, even if only one...
Please, don't misunderstand me. I didn't put together this tour for revenge or anything.

I want to give you and your father a gift, as well.
Ms. Zaizen...
Since High Priest Tenkai was proficient in verbal magic...
Huh?
You said that these seven places were chosen with three criteria, but there may have been a fourth hidden criterion. When I noticed that, I decided to believe the entire theory...
Mt. Fuji... Take the "Qi" from the legend of Xu Fu of Qi!
Atsuta Shrine... Take the "Ama" from the Sword of Ama-no-Murakumo!

大宮
Chichibu Shrine... Take the "O" from its former name of Omiya Myoken!
聖霊院
Shitenno Temple... Take the "Sho" from Shoryoin!
Tsurugaoka Hachiman Shrine... Take the "Pei" from Genpei Lake!
将門
Kanda Shrine... Take the "Masa" from Masakado's Mound!
And Bishamon Hall... Take the "Mon"!


GREAT SAGE, EQUAL OF HEAVEN: 斉天大聖 せいてんたいせい
TAIRA-NO- 平 たいら
MASA- 将 まさ
KADO 門 かど
Great Sage, Equal of Heaven... In this case, it may have meant that he was the equal to the Emperor...
His ambition was fulfilled by Ieyasu, seven hundred years later. Thus, Masakado may rest...
Now he sees naught, hears naught, and speaks naught...

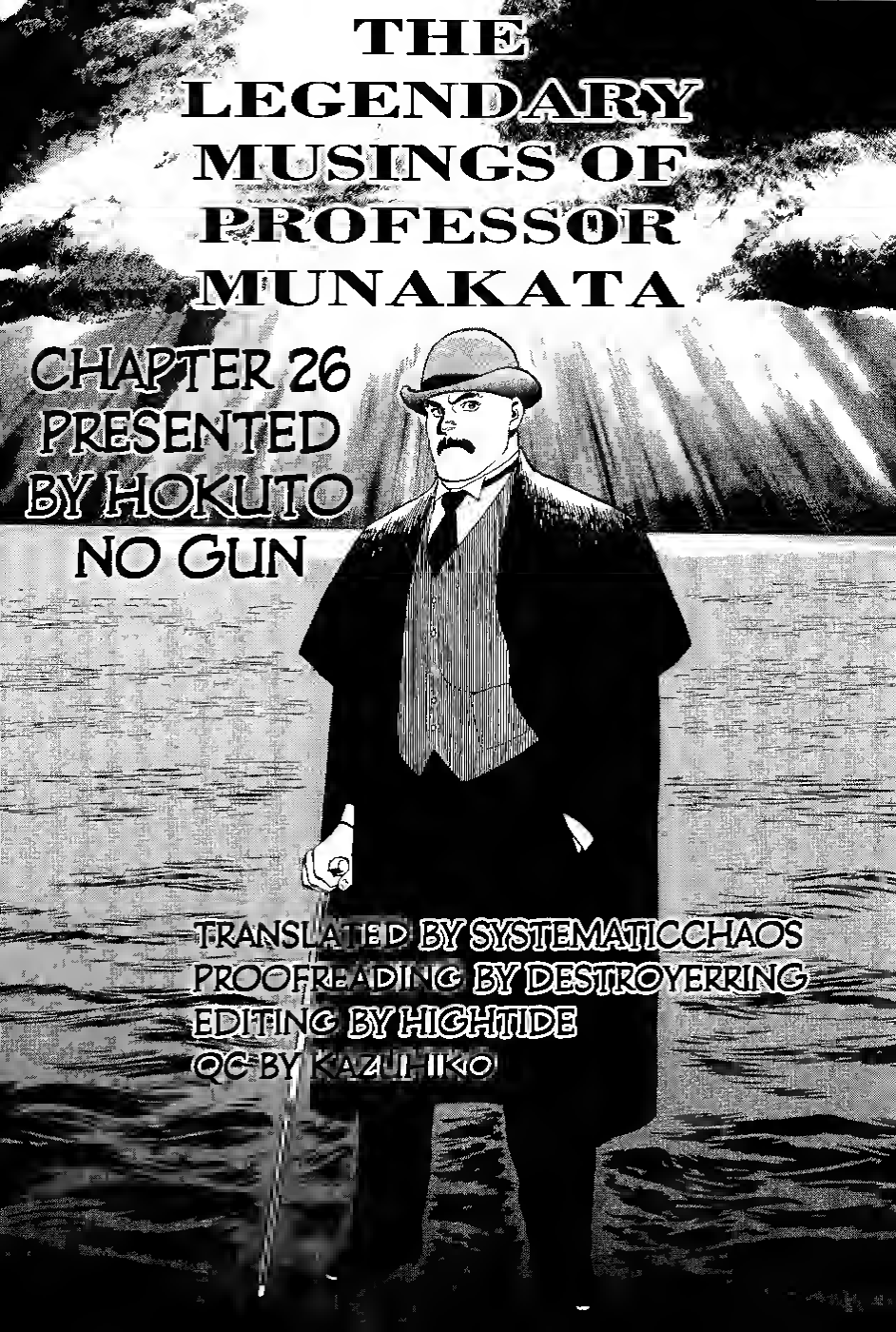
Pro-
fessor
Muna-
kata!
Whether or not Tenkai's spell truly existed, or whether it served its function...
After the Shogunate was overthrown in the Meiji Restoration, the Emperor abandoned Kyoto, and chose to start his new government in Tokyo...
It has now been the capital for four hundred years.

File 26: Masakado's Journey to the West: Part 3 – END

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

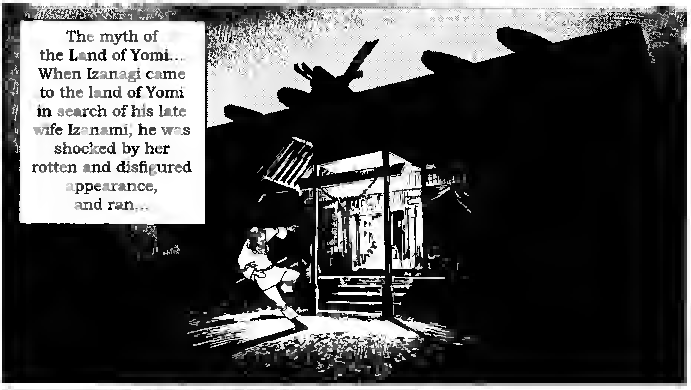
CHAPTER 26

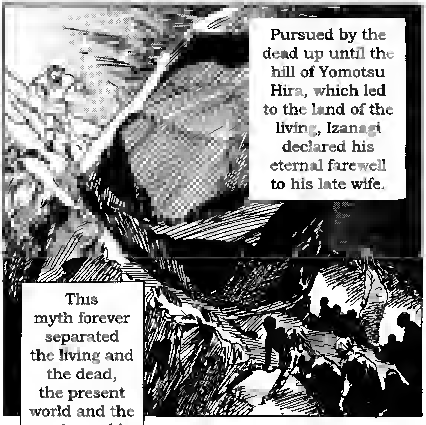
PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN



TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFREADING BY DESTROYERRING
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO

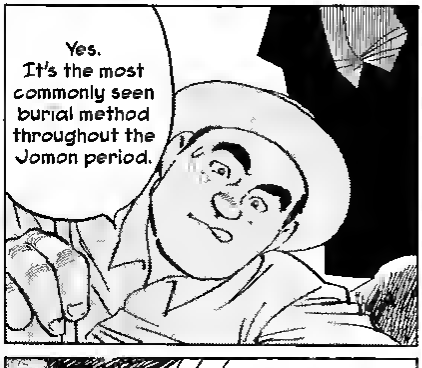
File 27:
What Did Kukurihime Declare?

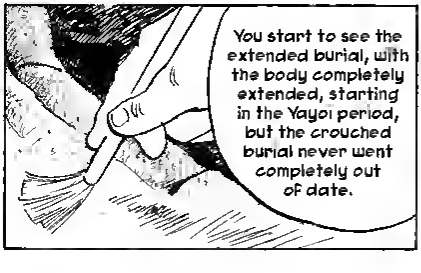

The myth of the Land of Yomi... When Izanagi came to the land of Yomi in search of his late wife Izanami, he was shocked by her rotten and disfigured appearance, and ran...

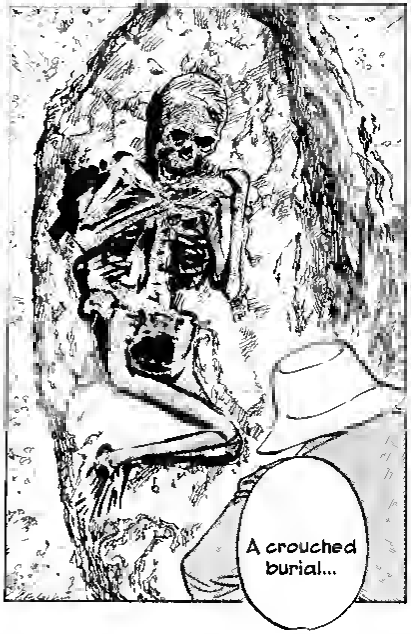

Pursued by the dead up until the hill of Yomotsu Hira, which led to the land of the living, Izanagi declared his eternal farewell to his late wife.
This myth forever separated the living and the dead, the present world and the underworld.

According to the first chapter of the "Nihon Shoki", a woman named Kukurihime then declared something to Izanagi.
But her words were not recorded, and no one knows what she said. All it says is that Izanagi praised her words.
Following this enigmatic scene with Kukurihime, Izanagi returned to the land of the living.

Ishikawa Prefecture
Near the Town of Nonoichi

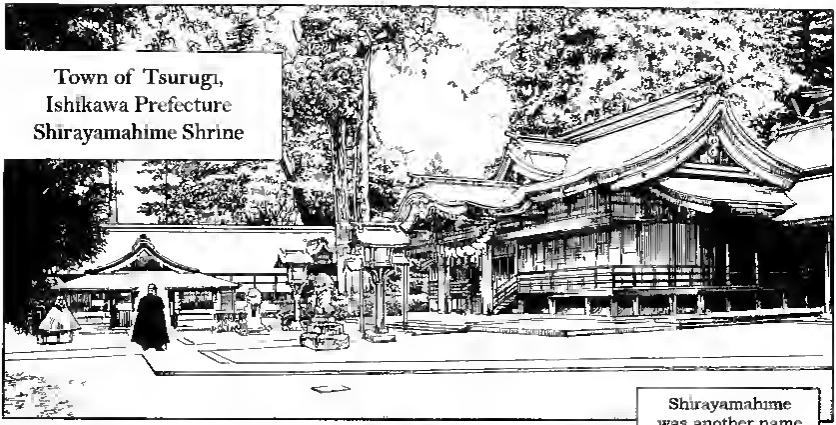

Yes.
It's the most commonly seen burial method throughout the Jomon period.


You start to see the extended burial, with the body completely extended, starting in the Yayoi period, but the crouched burial never went completely out of date.

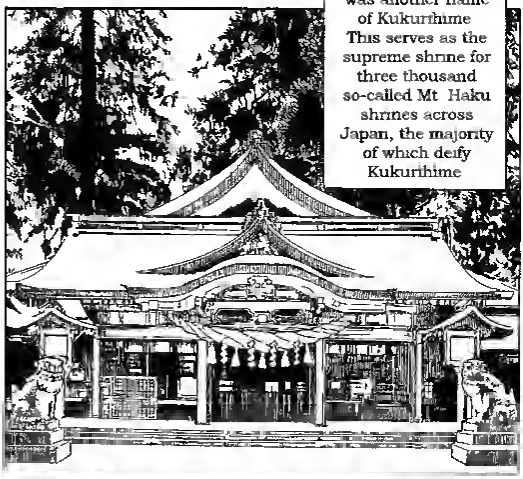

A crouched burial...

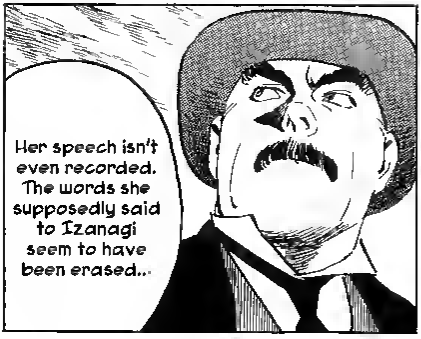
Fear of the dead...
You see some cases where they place a stone on the corpse's chest just to be double sure, but I suppose they didn't want the dead wandering around
That's about it... Huh?
Was it part of the clothes, or was it...?
Looks like some kind of fiber... It's sticking to a number of parts of the body.
What is it?

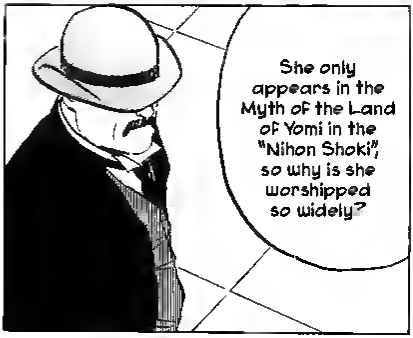
At least call me in two or three days. We should know something by then. Here's my number.
I'm sorry. I know that I ought to show you around to repay you for helping me when I was a student, but we need to perform the study quickly, before the construction begins...
I'm somewhat interested in the analysis results, but now that I've come up to Ishikawa, there's somewhere that I'd like to visit.
You're right. Soon it'll be beautiful and white, just like its name suggests.
Mt. Haku should be getting its first snowcap any day now.

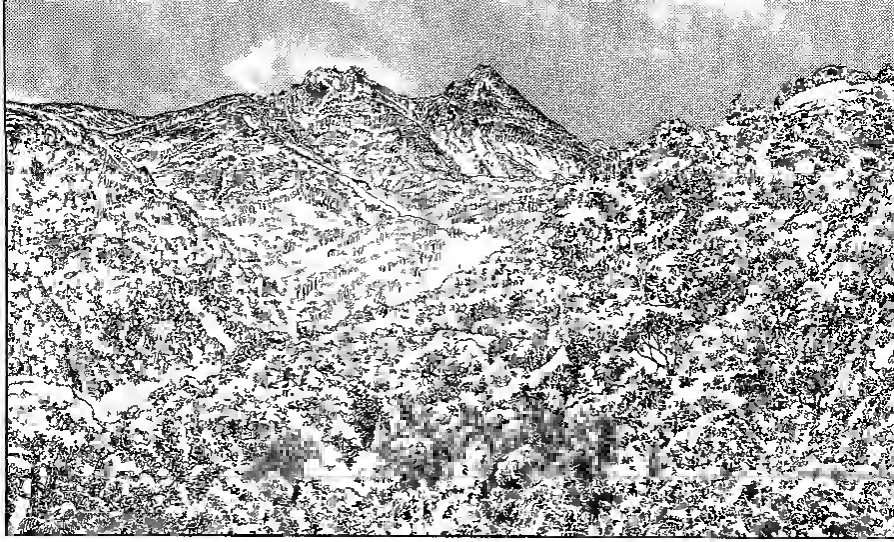

Town of Tsurugi,
Ishikawa Prefecture
Shirayamahime Shrine

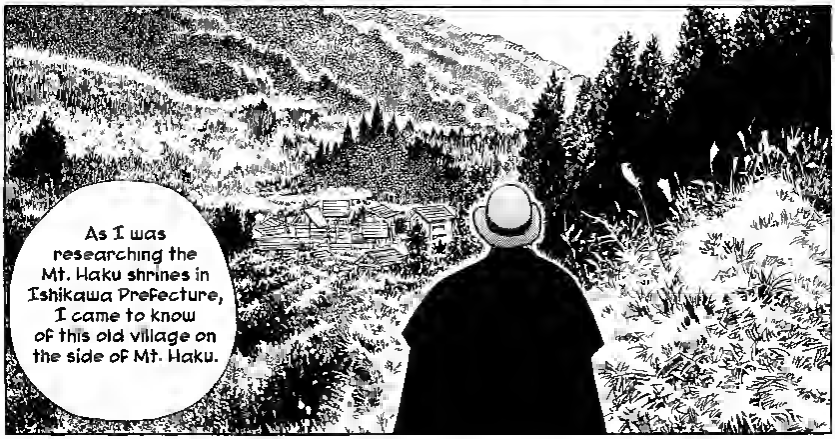
Kukurihime is a rather odd goddess.


Shirayamahime was another name of Kukurihime This serves as the supreme shrine for three thousand so-called Mt Haku shrines across Japan, the majority of which deify Kukurihime

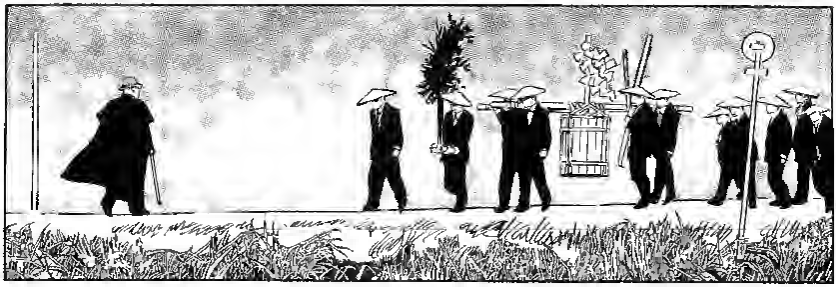

Her speech isn't even recorded. The words she supposedly said to Izanagi seem to have been erased...

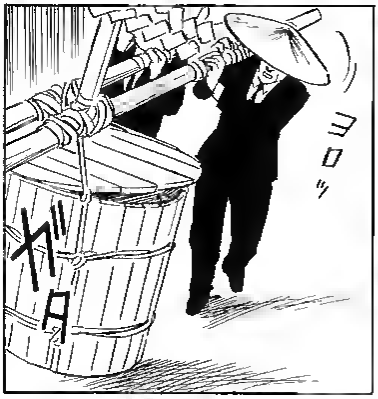

She only appears in the Myth of the Land of Yomi in the "Nihon Shoki", so why is she worshipped so widely?




As I was researching the Mt. Haku shrines in Ishikawa Prefecture, I came to know of this old village on the side of Mt. Haku.

Kikuri Village... On second thought, it may be better to say I was drawn here...

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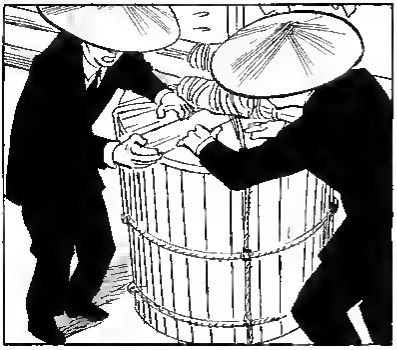
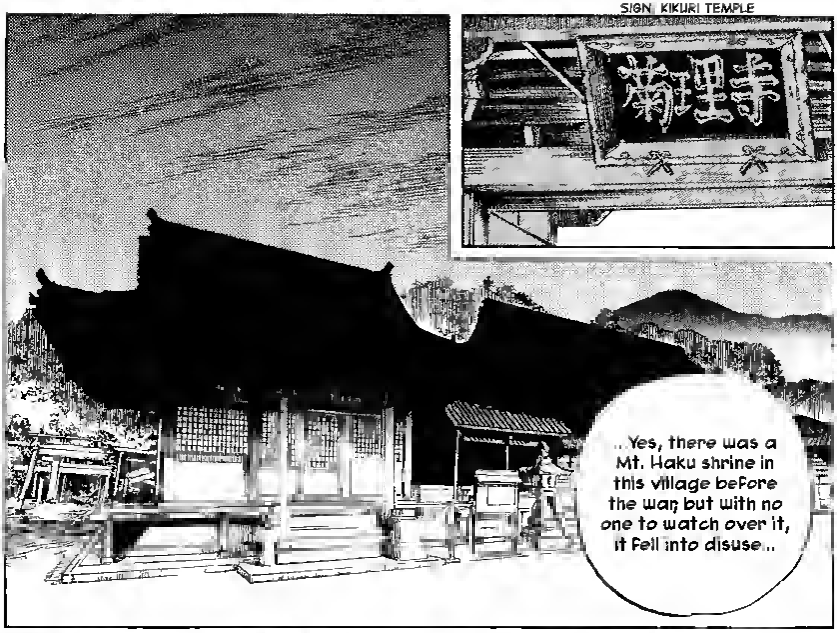
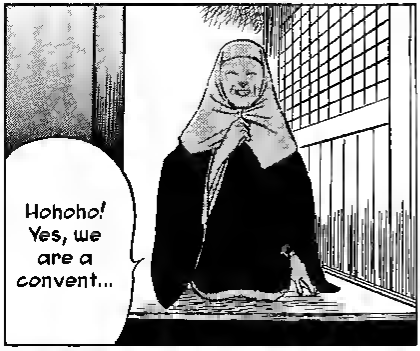
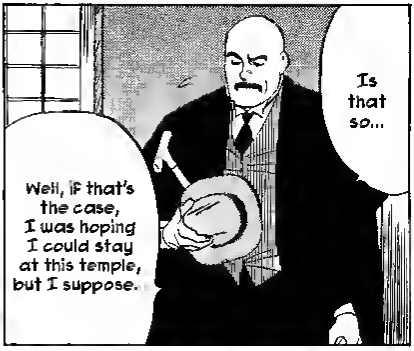
ガタ



Shhh..
He's not going to enter Nirvana, not with that dreadful death .. We've got to go ask Mother Renju...
You don't see a crouching casket often these days. Does this village perform burials?


SIGN: KIKURI TEMPLE
菊理寺
...Yes, there was a Mt. Haku shrine in this village before the war, but with no one to watch over it, it fell into disuse...


Hohoho! Yes, we are a convent...


Is that so...
Well, if that's the case, I was hoping I could stay at this temple, but I suppose.

That said, this village does not even have an inn. Let's see...

So there's a graveyard by this temple. Wasn't there a service going on today?
This detachment is practically a hovel, but it does have a hedge around it. You'll have to put up with it, I'm afraid.
He would turn violent when he drank. His family left him, and his neighbors would barge in to his house...
At the end of it all, he must have acted out of retaliation for being ganged up on. He doused himself with kerosene in his neighbor's garden, and...
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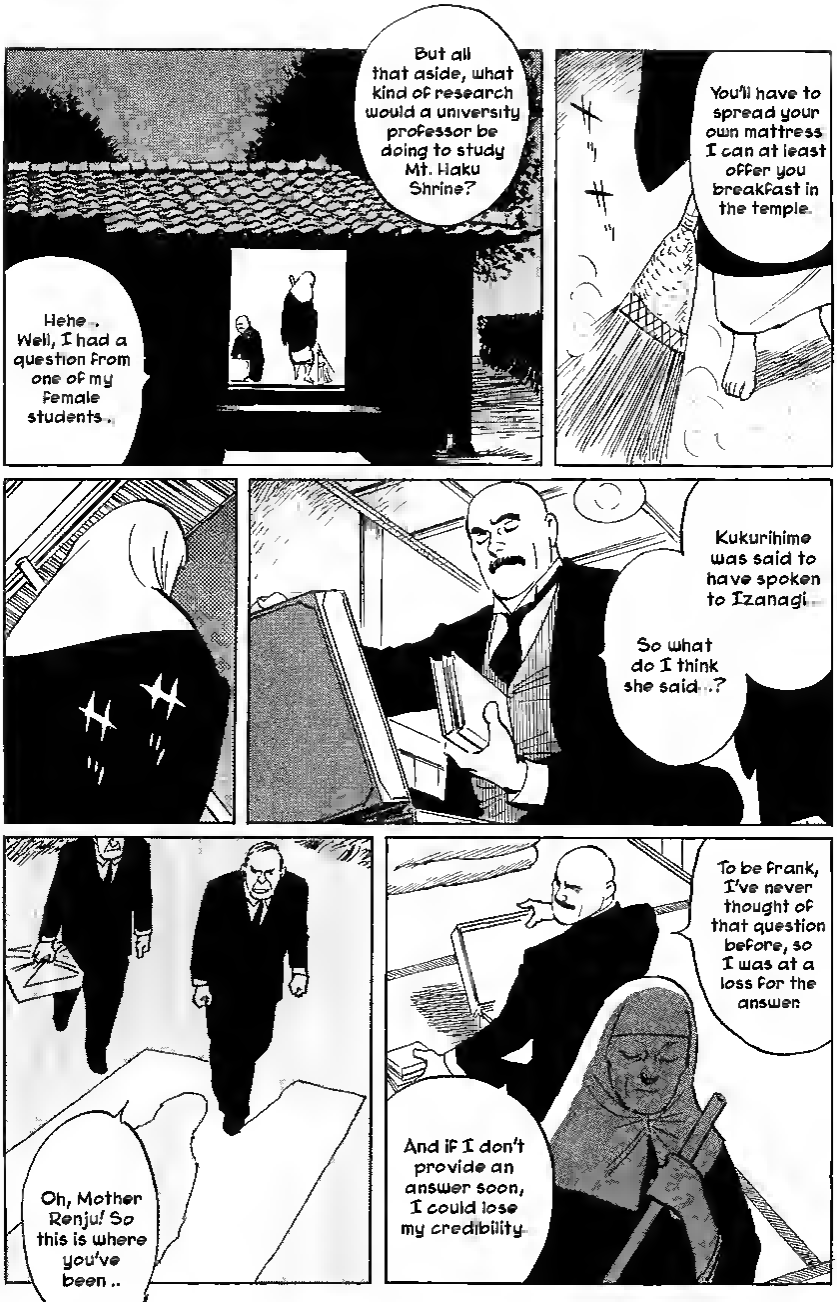
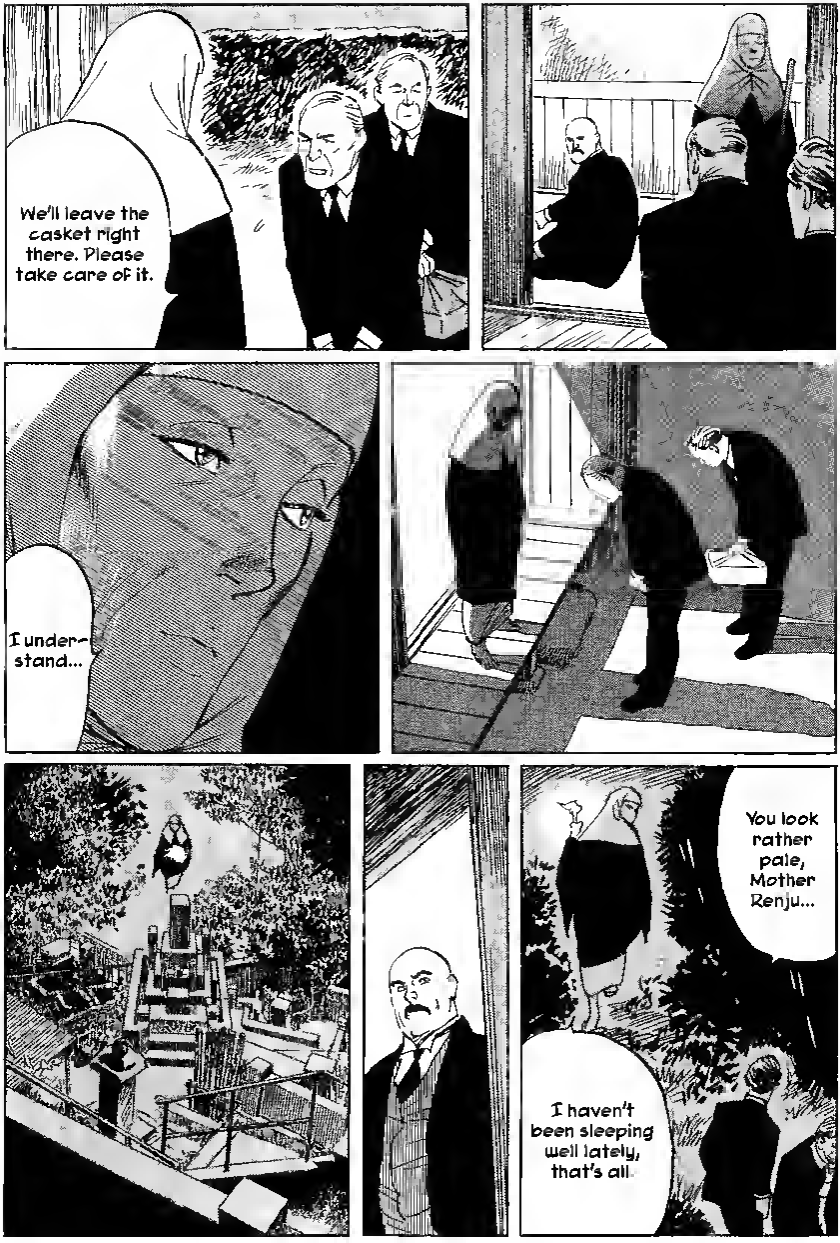
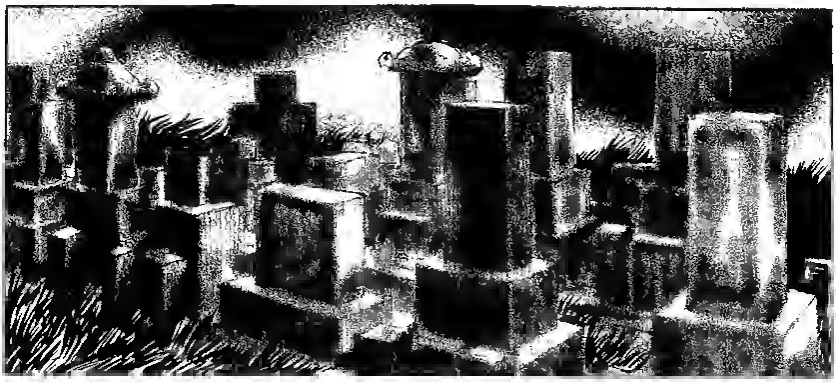
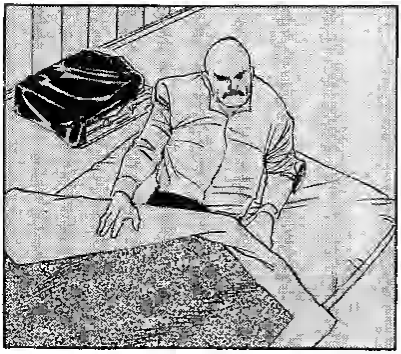
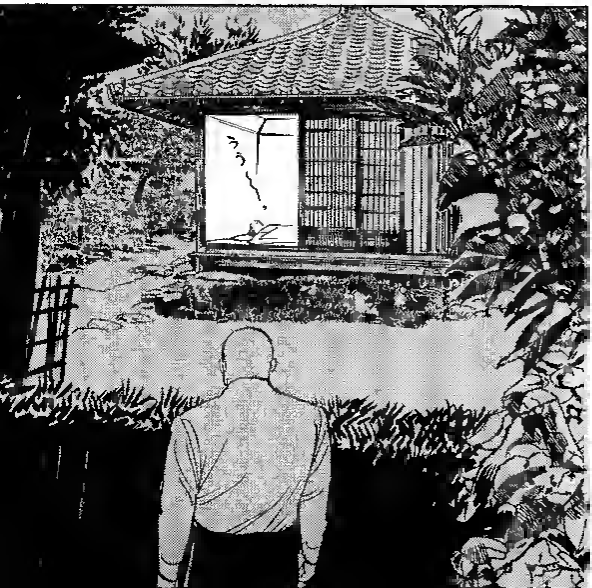
Yes. And the deceased died a truly terrible death

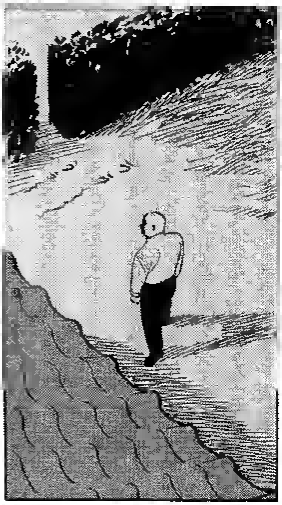

But all that aside, what kind of research would a university professor be doing to study Mt. Haku Shrine?
Hehe.. Well, I had a question from one of my female students..
You'll have to spread your own mattress. I can at least offer you breakfast in the temple.
Kukurihime was said to have spoken to Izanagi...
So what do I think she said...?
To be frank, I've never thought of that question before, so I was at a loss for the answer.
And if I don't provide an answer soon, I could lose my credibility.
Oh, Mother Renju! So this is where you've been..

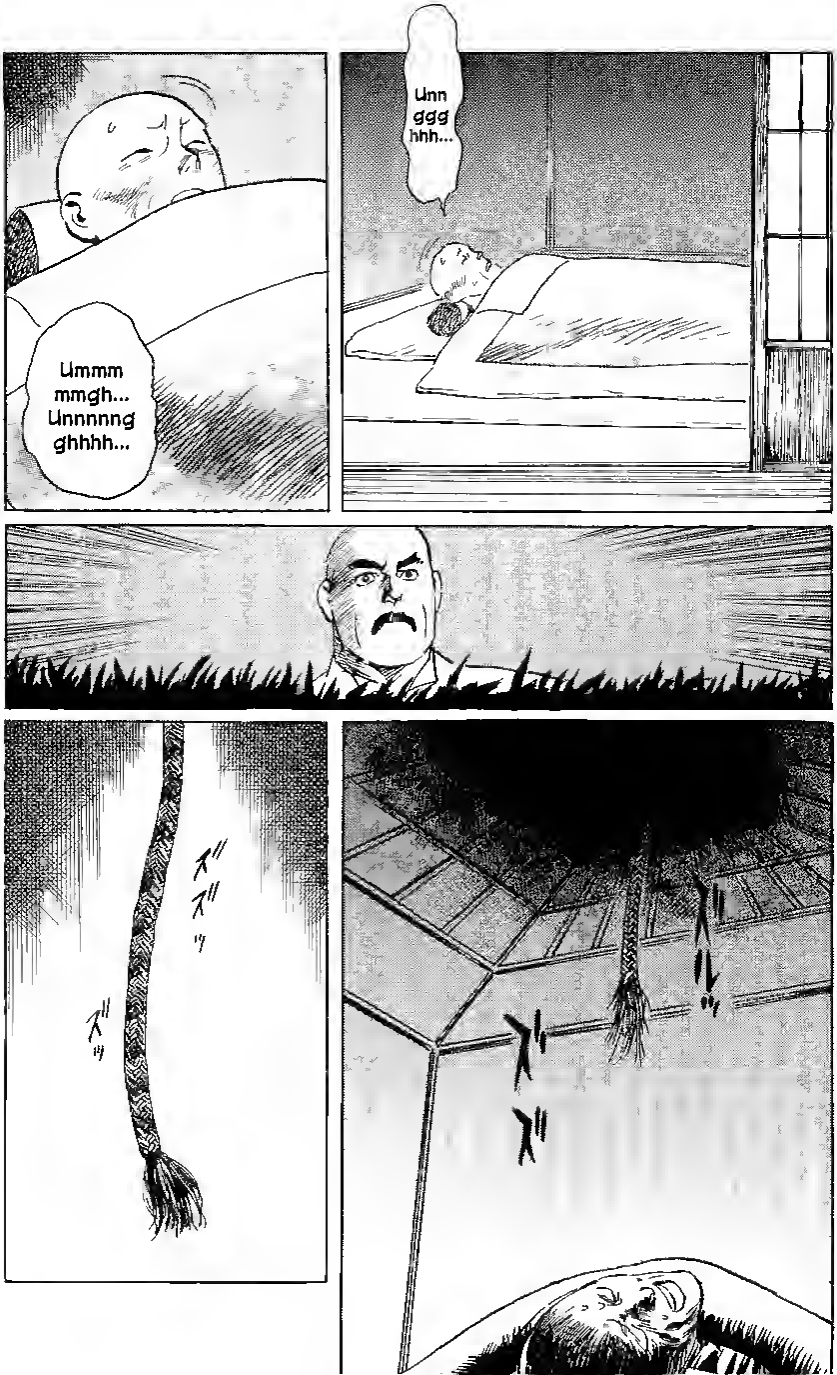

We'll leave the casket right there. Please take care of it.
I understand...
You look rather pale, Mother Renju...
I haven't been sleeping well lately, that's all.

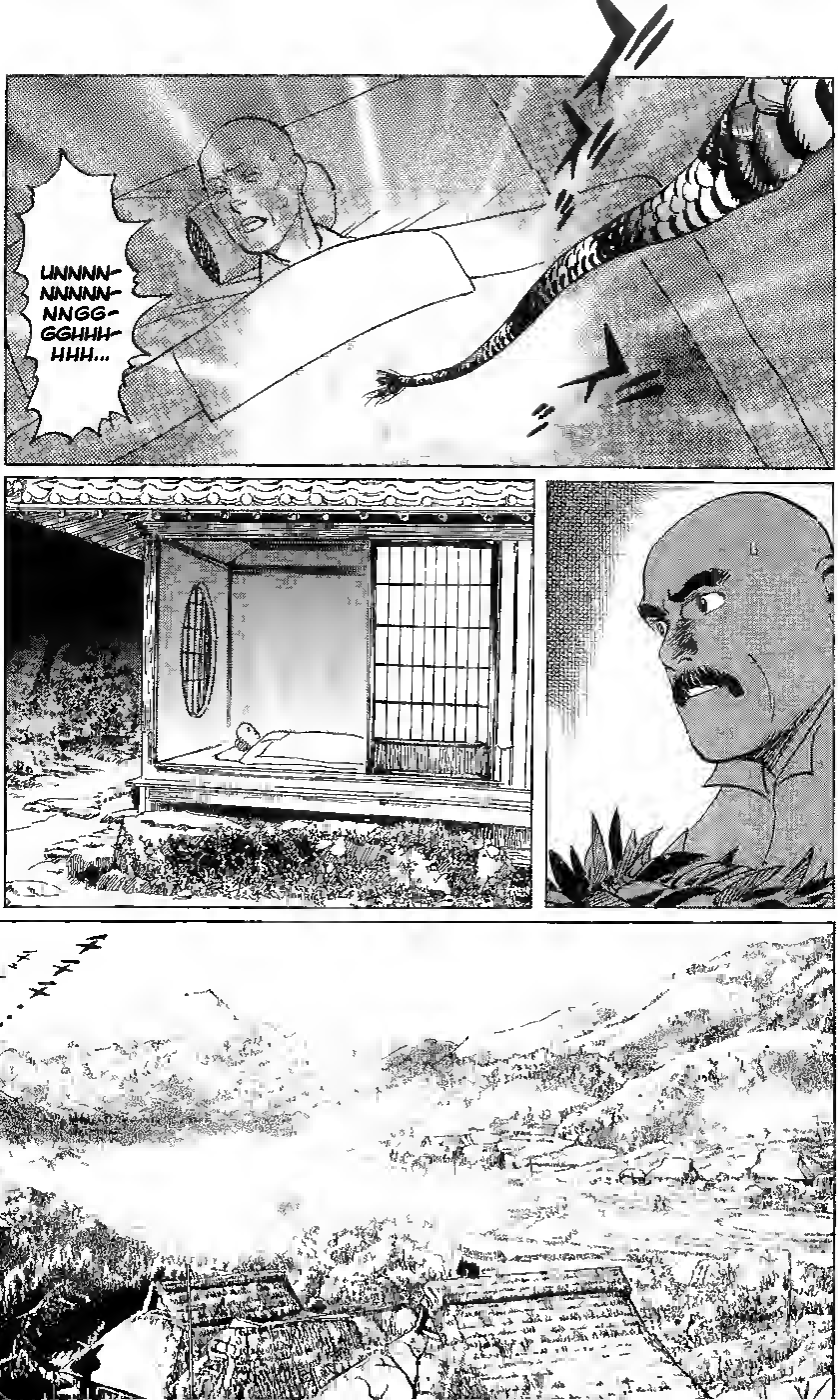


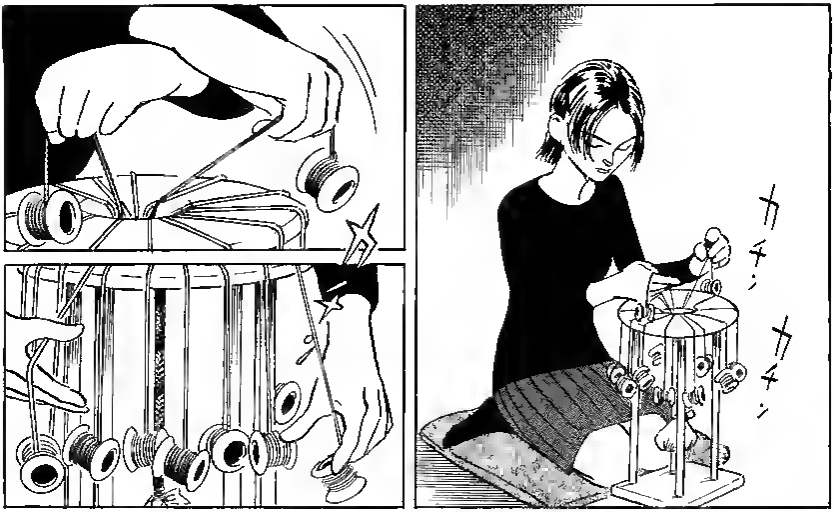


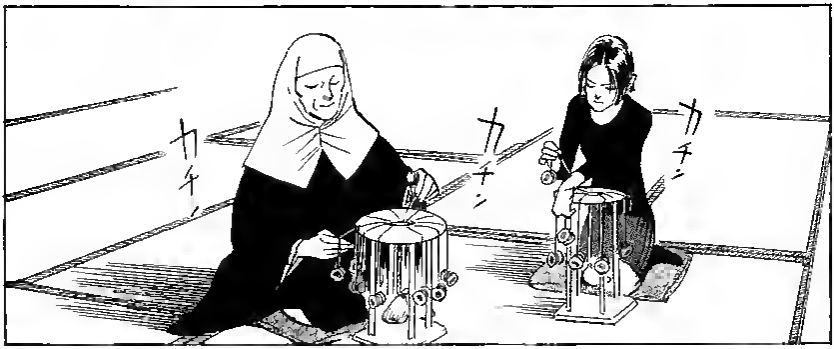





Ummm mmgh... Unnnnng ghhhh...
Unn ggg hhh...


UNNNN-
NNNNN-
NNGG-
GGHHH-
HHH...


カチン カチン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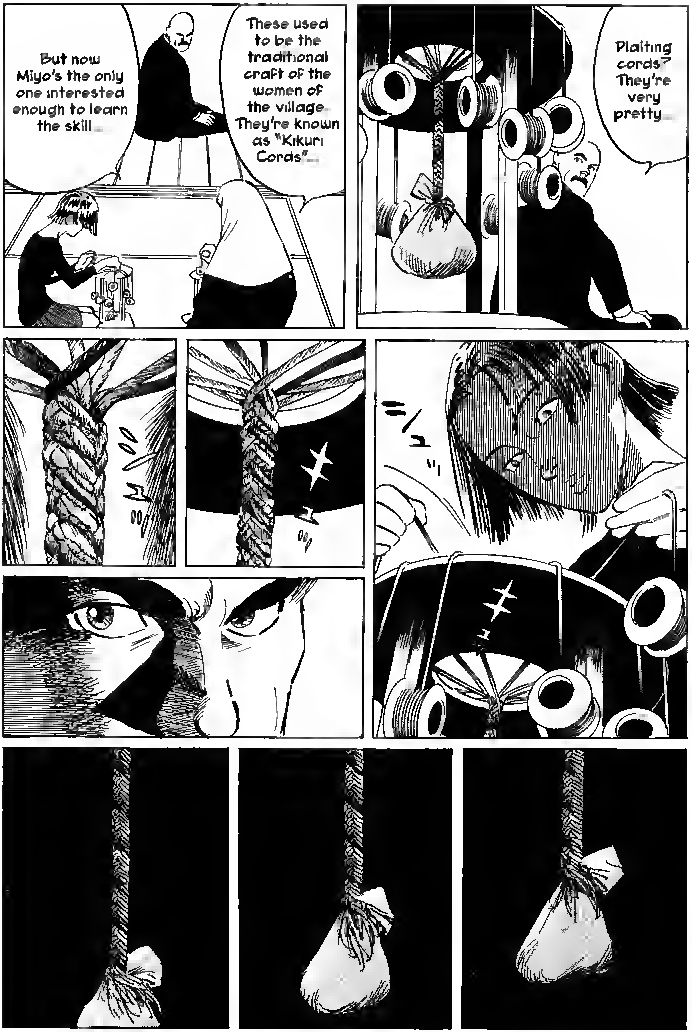
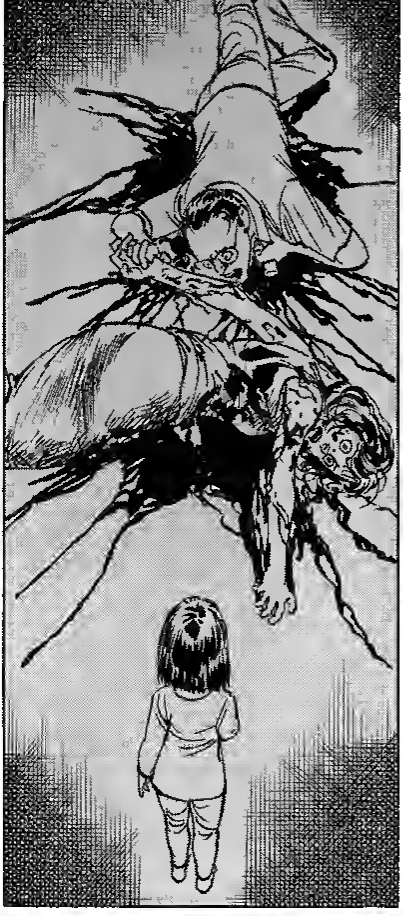
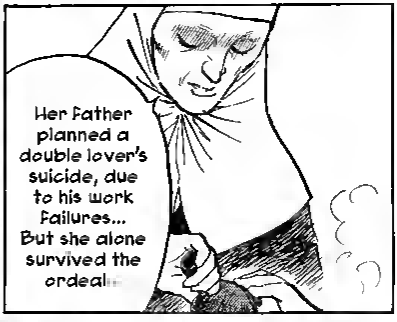
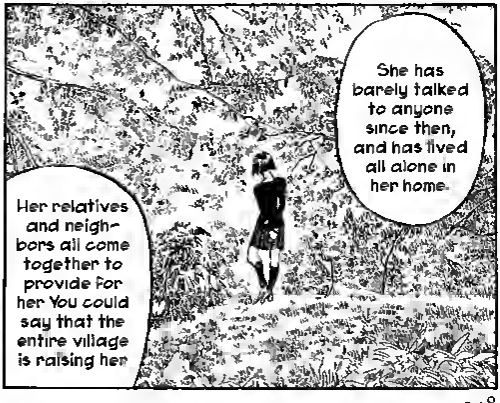
Oh, good morning... I'll get breakfast ready once we're done over here.
Good morn-ing...
.....

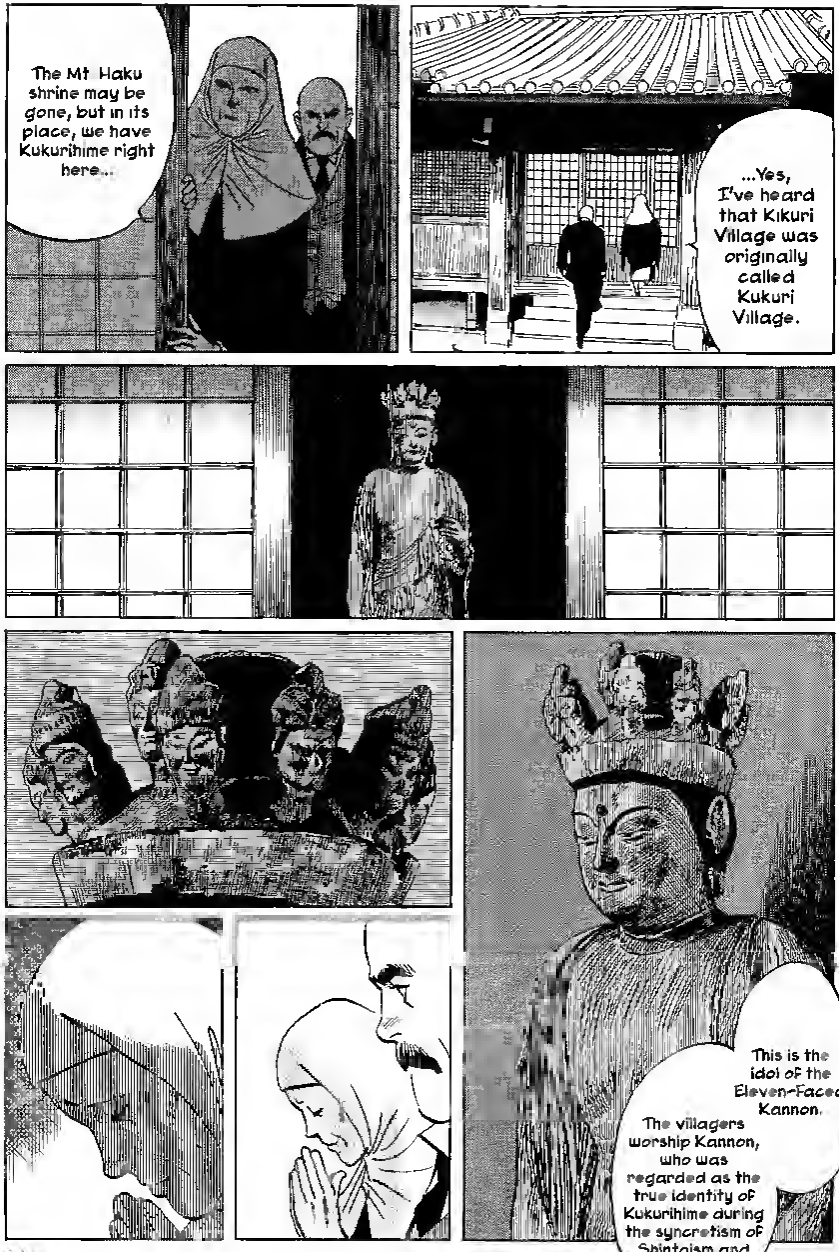

These used to be the traditional craft of the women of the village. They're known as "Kikuri Cords"...
But now Miyo's the only one interested enough to learn the skill...
Plaiting cords? They're very pretty...

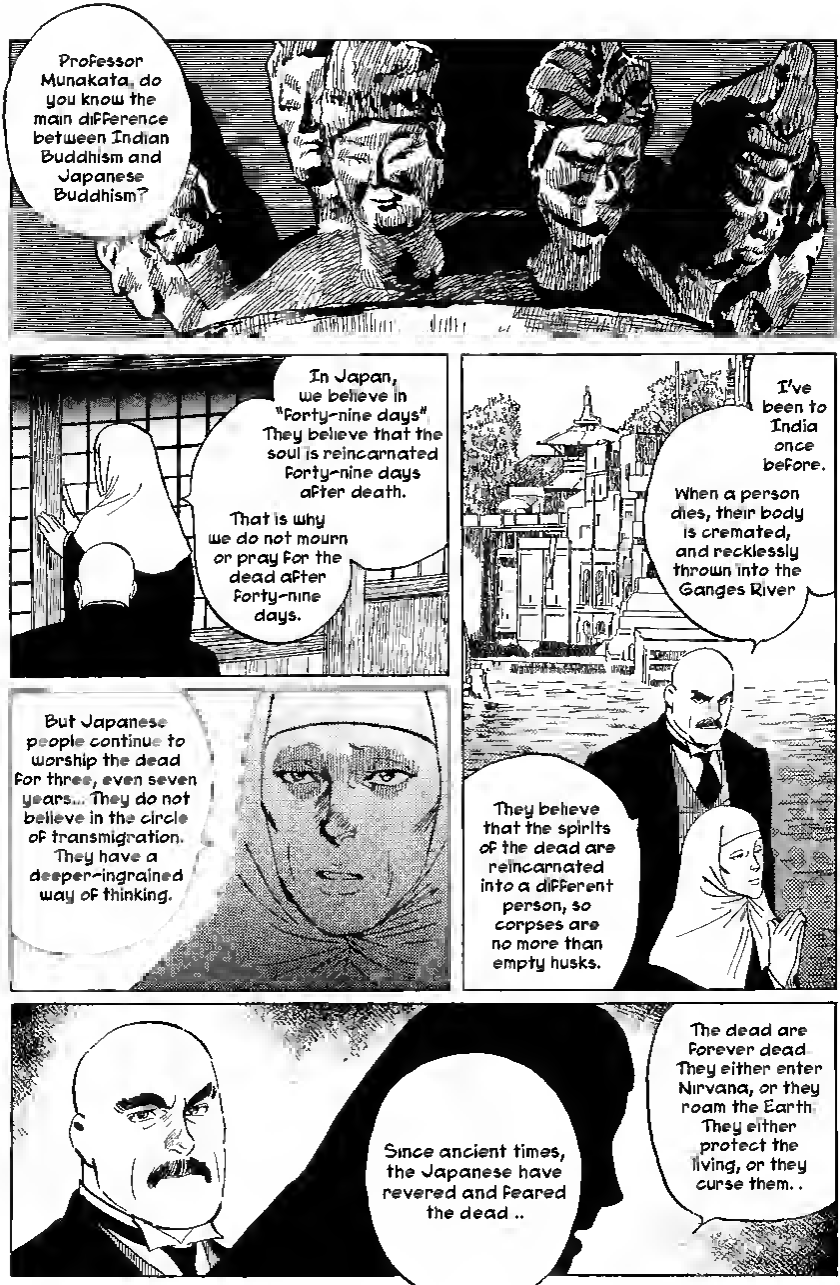


What, Miyo? Oh, she's such a poor girl.

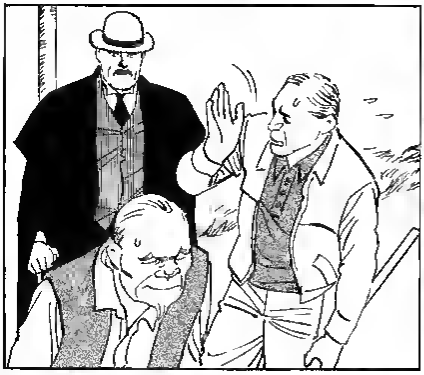

Her father planned a double lover's suicide, due to his work failures... But she alone survived the ordeal.

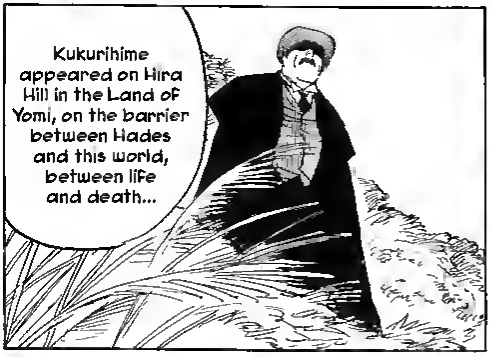

Her relatives and neighbors all come together to provide for her. You could say that the entire village is raising her.
She has barely talked to anyone since then, and has lived all alone in her home.


The Mt. Haku shrine may be gone, but in its place, we have Kukurihime right here...
...Yes, I've heard that Kikuri Village was originally called Kukuri Village.
This is the idol of the Eleven-Faced Kannon.
The villagers worship Kannon, who was regarded as the true identity of Kukurihime during the syncretism of Shintoism and Buddhism

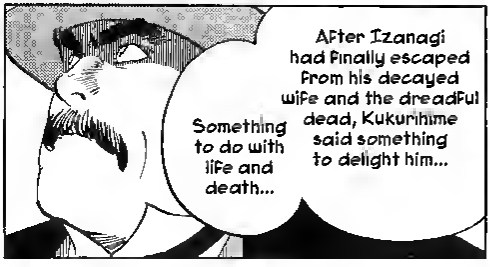

Professor Munakata, do you know the main difference between Indian Buddhism and Japanese Buddhism?
In Japan, we believe in "forty-nine days" They believe that the soul is reincarnated forty-nine days after death.
That is why we do not mourn or pray for the dead after forty-nine days.
I've been to India once before.
When a person dies, their body is cremated, and recklessly thrown into the Ganges River
They believe that the spirits of the dead are reincarnated into a different person, so corpses are no more than empty husks.
But Japanese people continue to worship the dead for three, even seven years... They do not believe in the circle of transmigration. They have a deeper-ingrained way of thinking.
Since ancient times, the Japanese have revered and feared the dead ..
The dead are forever dead. They either enter Nirvana, or they roam the Earth. They either protect the living, or they curse them. .

Pardon me... I need to rest, I'm not feeling well...

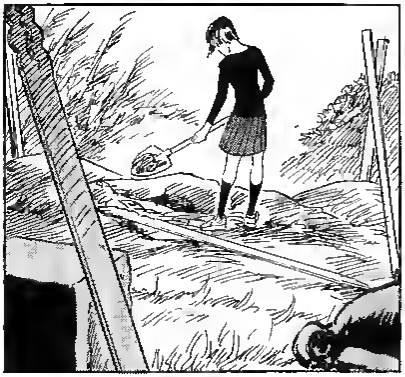


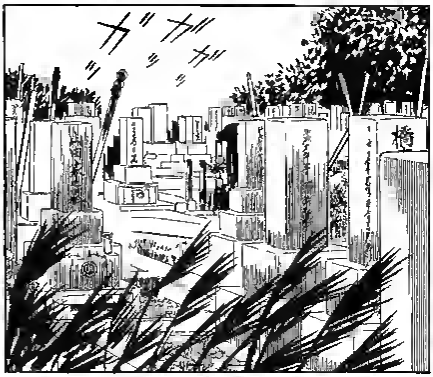

Kukurihime appeared on Hira Hill in the Land of Yomi, on the barrier between Hades and this world, between life and death...

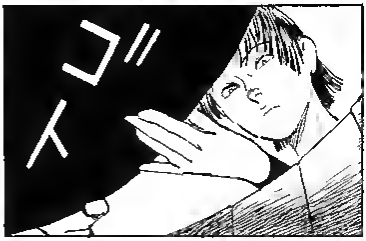
I tried to ask about Kukurihime, but to no avail..


Something to do with life and death...
After Izanagi had finally escaped from his decayed wife and the dreadful dead, Kukurihime said something to delight him...

Something that once spread all throughout Japan, yet has been kept from being put into words...



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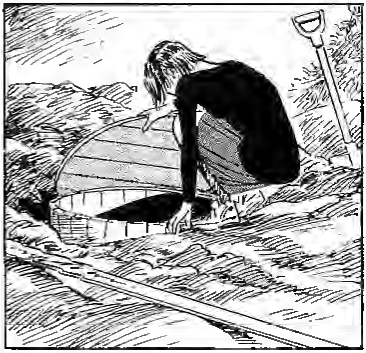
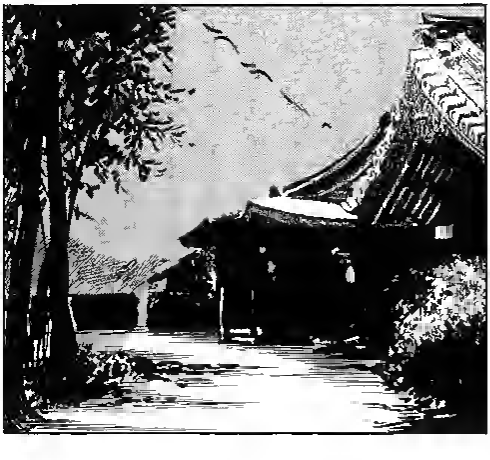
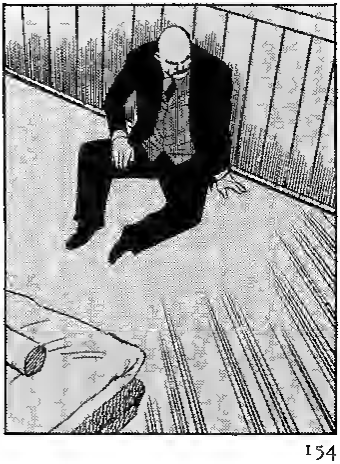
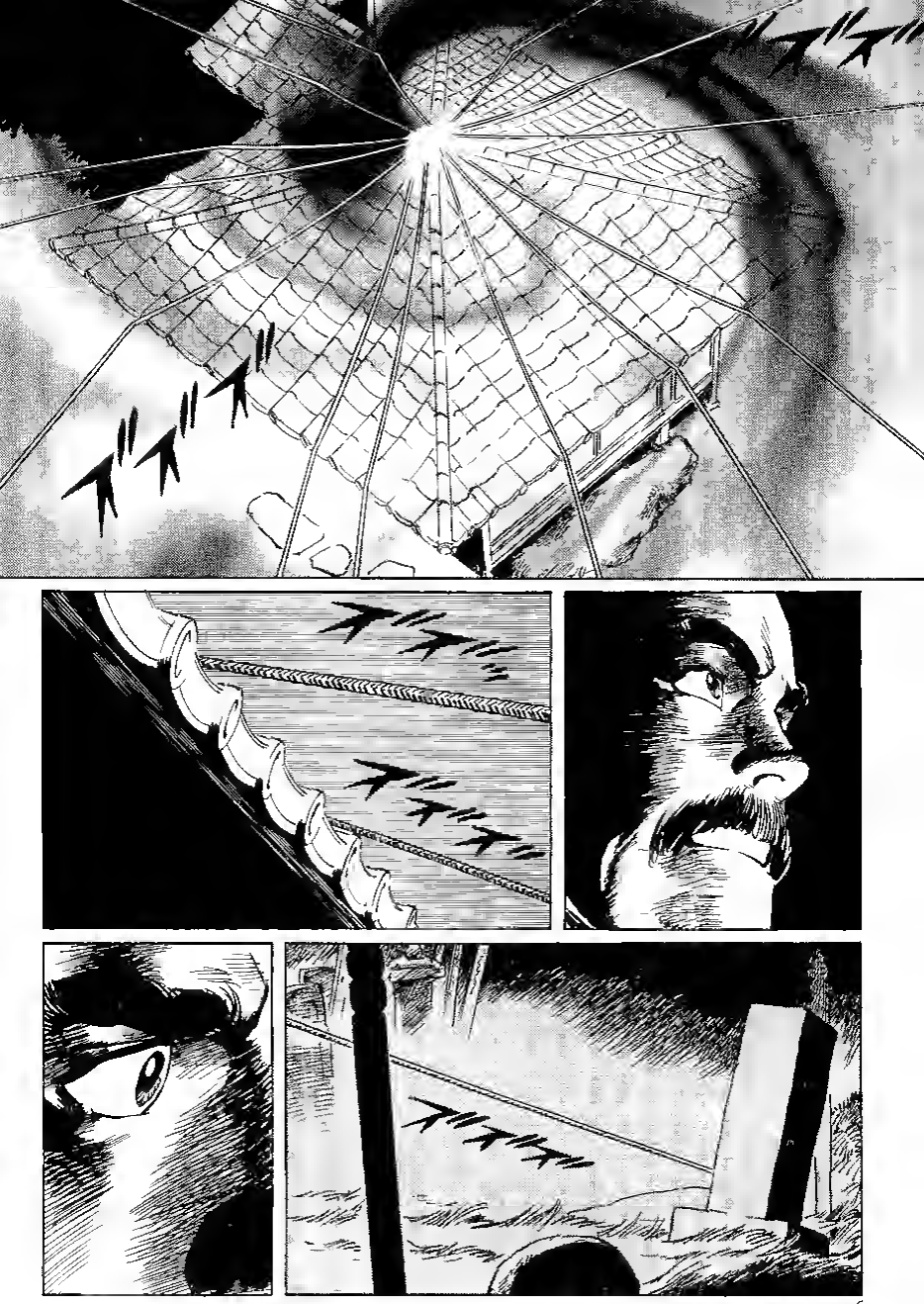


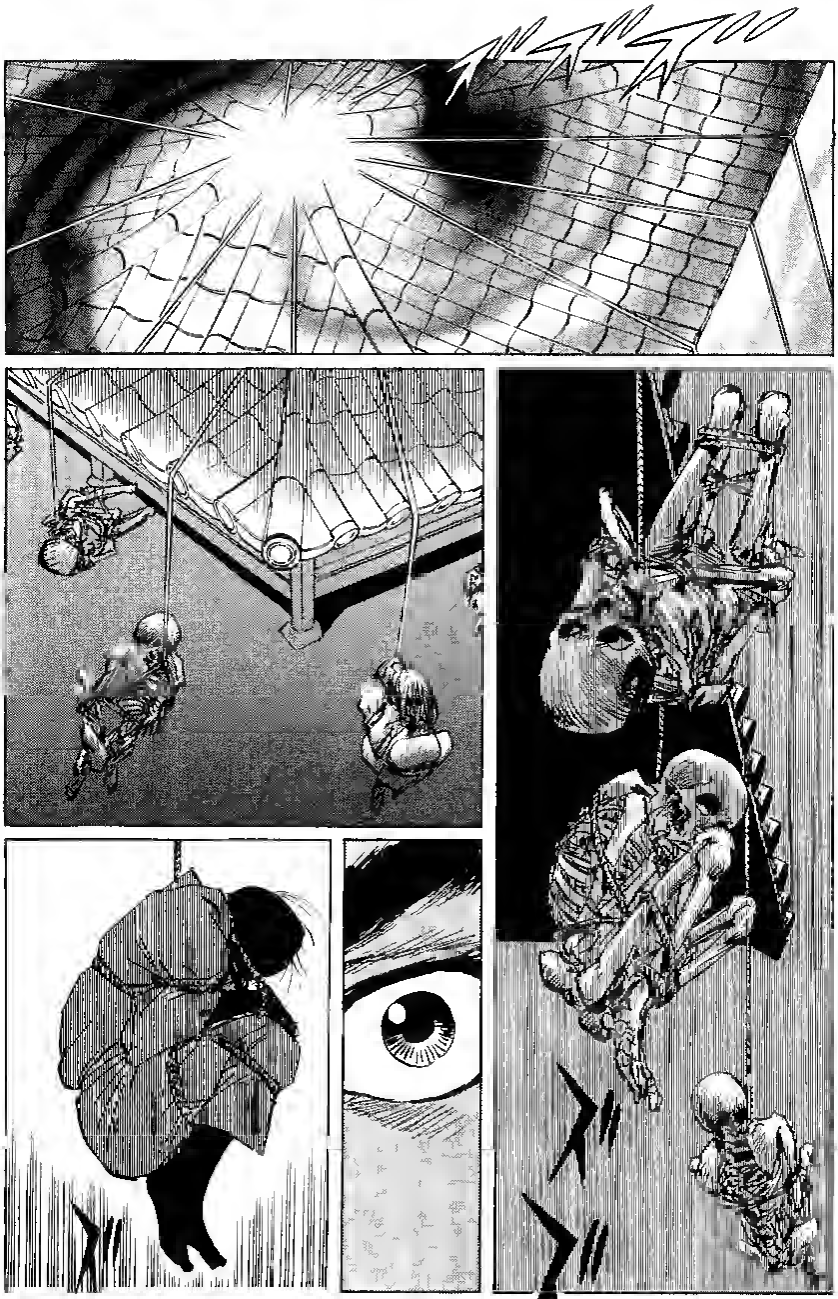




UNNN-
NGGH-
HHH...
UNGG-
HHHH...
UM-
MMMM
MGH...

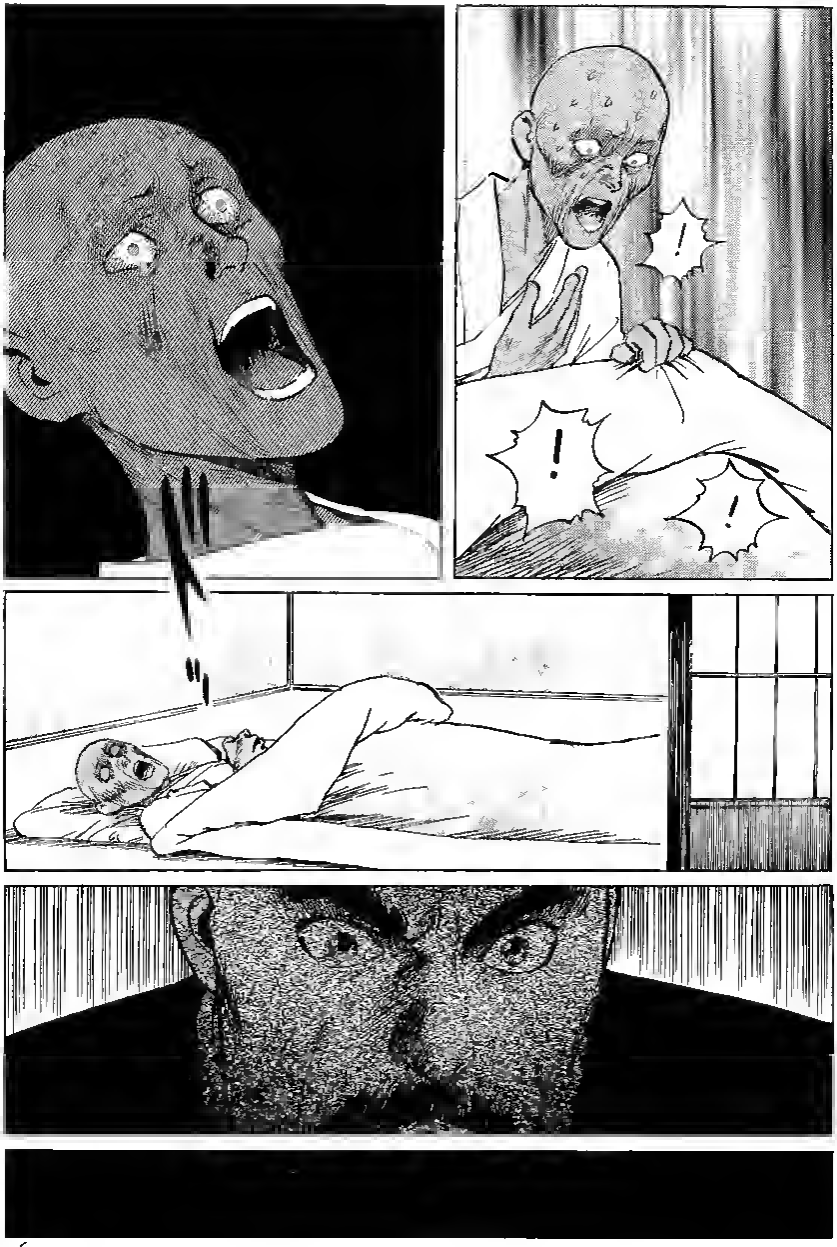


UNN
NNG
GHH
HH!



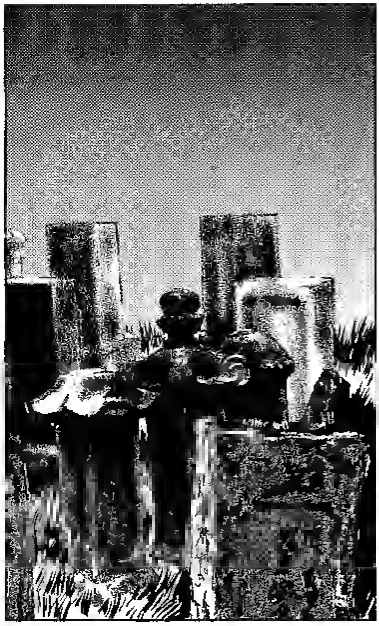
UM-
MMMG
GHHH...
GGH-
HHH-
HH...
UNN-
NNG-
GGH-
HH...

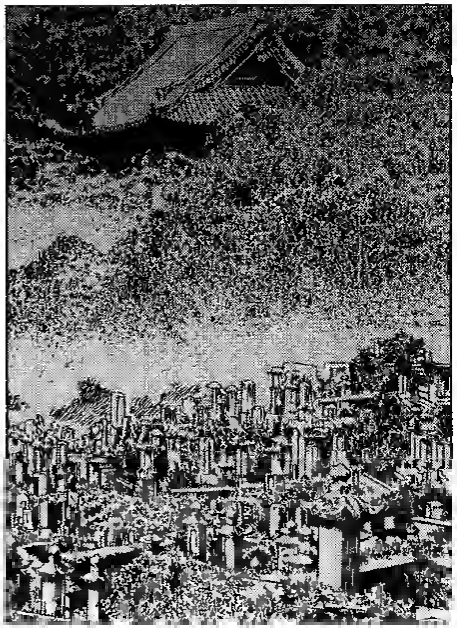
GWEEEEEUUUU
GGGHHHHHH!!

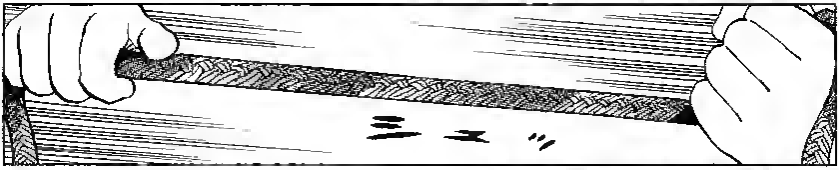


...She died in her bed, it seems. I hear she went stiff with an intense expression...
I'm sorry to trouble you like this...
On top of that, you had passed out as well, and someone contacted me with the number I gave you.
Oh, that reminds me. We've figured out that artifact.
.....
It's a rope, or rather a plaited cord!
We believe that they used it to bind the corpses and keep them bent...!
What exactly happened? How did the nun die...?
I can't explain it .. I'll have to tell this tale on a summer's night.

I see. A plaited cord...!
.....



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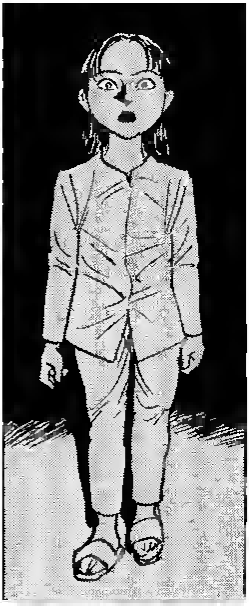
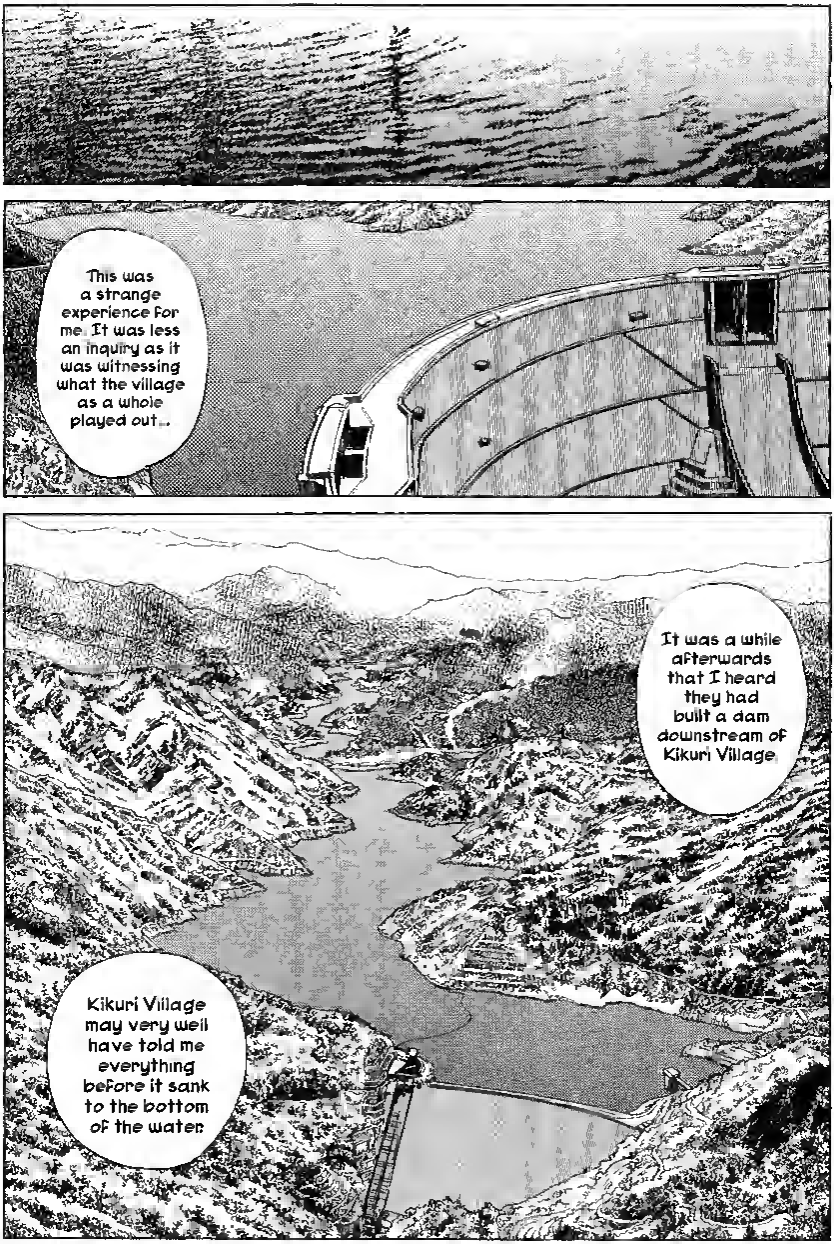


THOU WHO ART DEFILED BY DEATH, SO THAT THY ABOMINABLE CORPSE MAY NOT WANDER THE LAND OF THE LIVING...
I BIND THEE!!

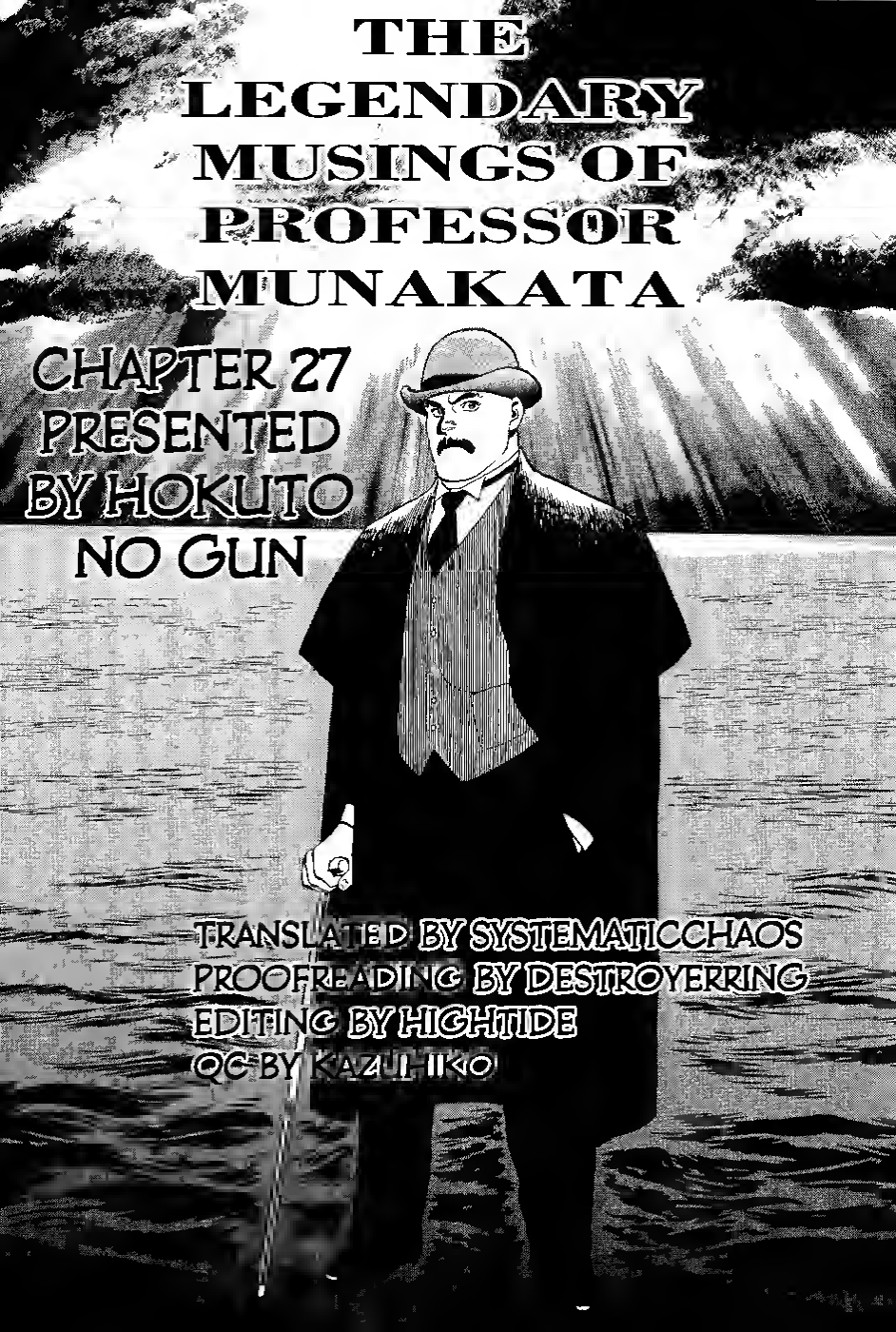
They've excavated a piece of a "Five-stranded plaited cord" from the Sannai-Maruyama ruins in Tohoku. It's the oldest cord in Japan.
The Jomon people didn't just use ropes.
"Kukurihime", the Binding Maidens... Amidst a spiritual climate marked by fear of the dead and trembling of vengeful spirits...
The villages must have had constant need of these women since ancient times...


This was a strange experience for me. It was less an inquiry as it was witnessing what the village as a whole played out...
It was a while afterwards that I heard they had built a dam downstream of Kikuri Village.
Kikuri Village may very well have told me everything before it sank to the bottom of the water.

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 27

PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN

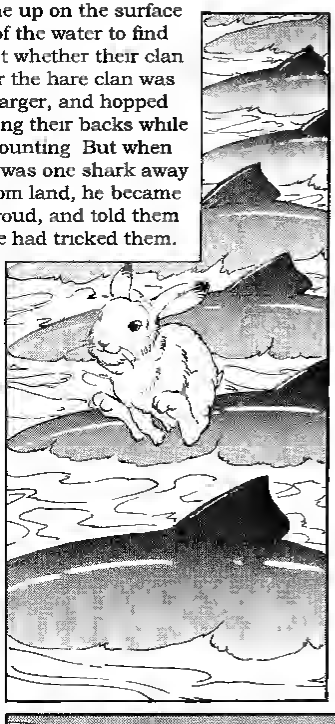


TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFREADING BY DESTROYERRING
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO

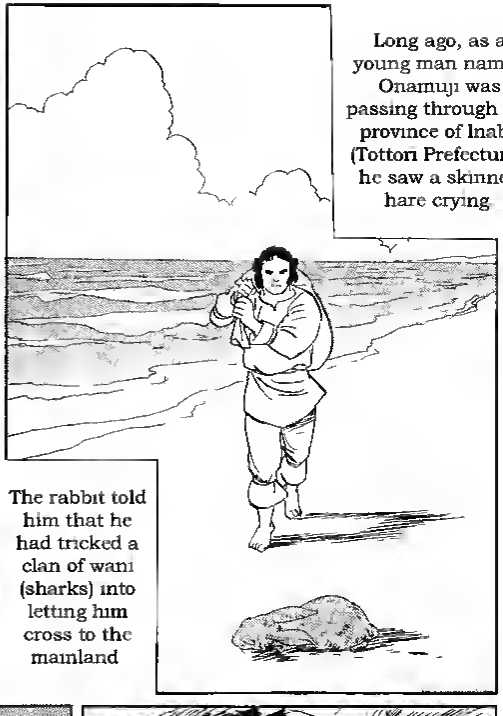
File 28:
The Hare of Winter

White Hare Coast,
Tottori Prefecture

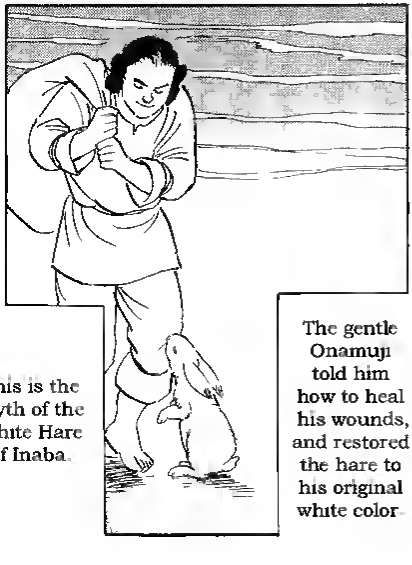
He told the sharks to line up on the surface of the water to find out whether their clan or the hare clan was larger, and hopped along their backs while counting. But when he was one shark away from land, he became proud, and told them he had tricked them.



Long ago, as a young man named Onamuji was passing through the province of Inaba (Tottori Prefecture), he saw a skinned hare crying.

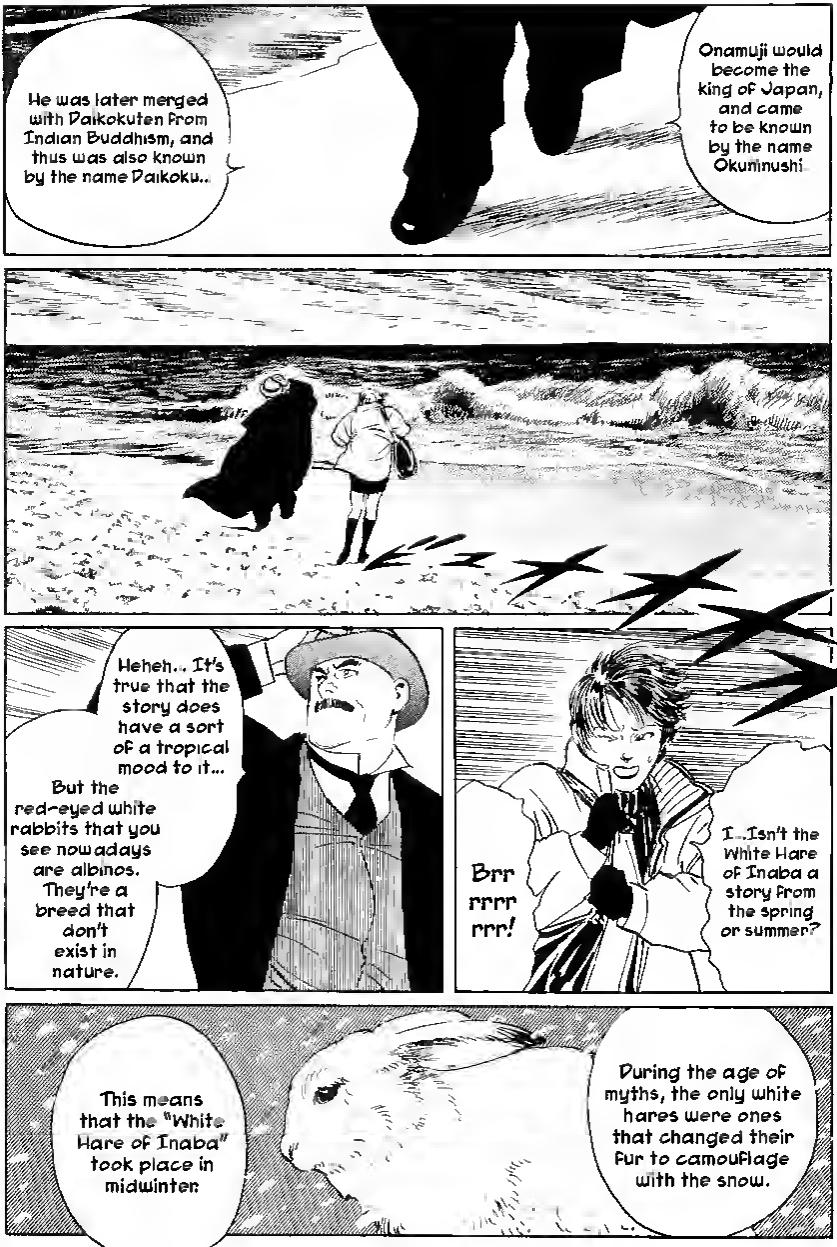


The rabbit told him that he had tricked a clan of wani (sharks) into letting him cross to the mainland.

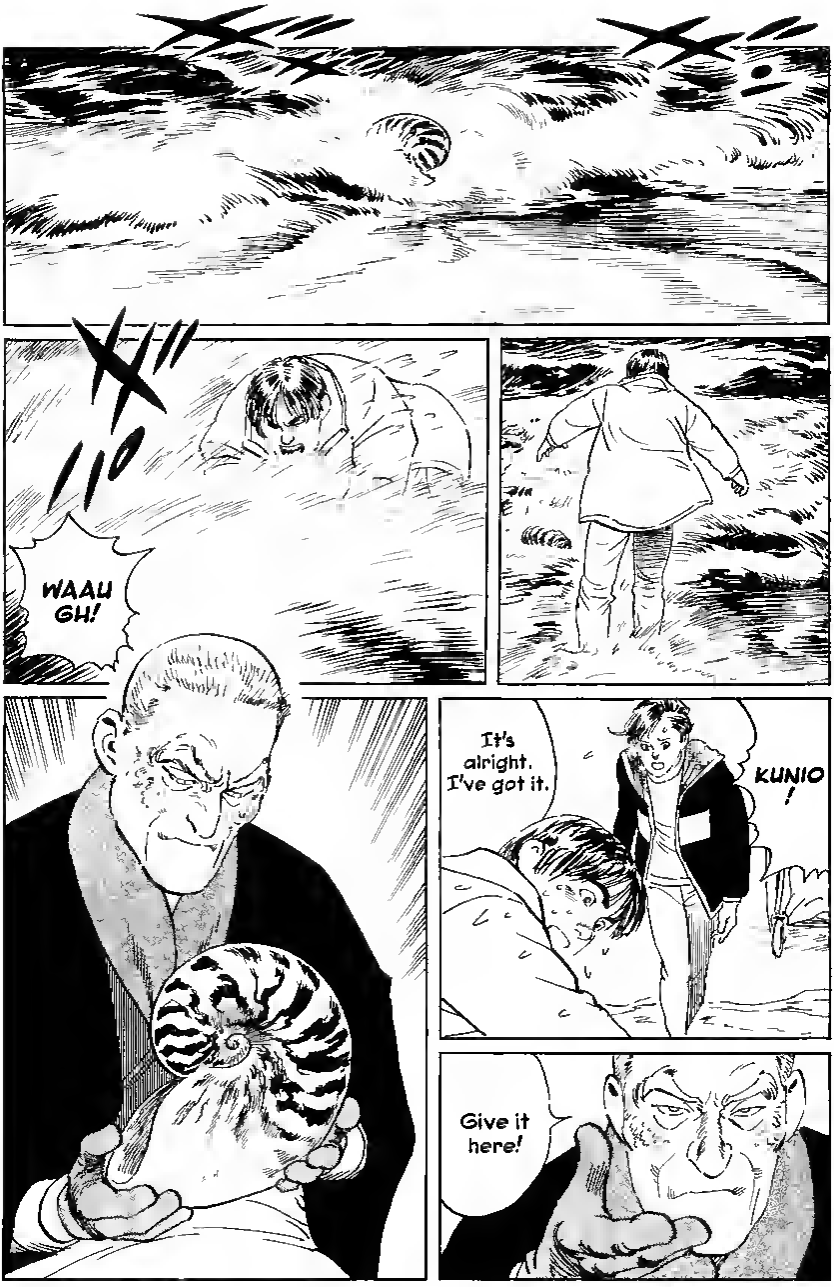


This is the myth of the White Hare of Inaba.

The gentle Onamuji told him how to heal his wounds, and restored the hare to his original white color.

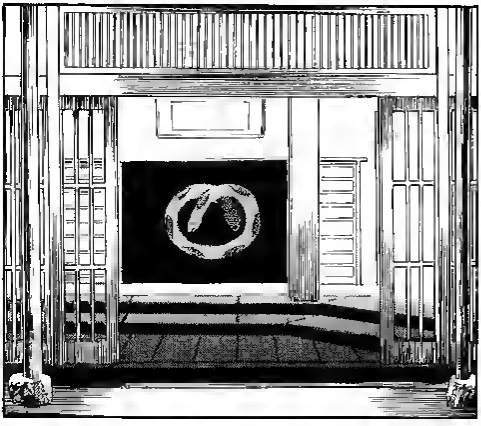

He was later merged with Daikokuten from Indian Buddhism, and thus was also known by the name Daikoku..
Onamuji would become the king of Japan, and came to be known by the name Okuninushi.
Heheh... It's true that the story does have a sort of a tropical mood to it...
But the red-eyed white rabbits that you see nowadays are albinos. They're a breed that don't exist in nature.
Brr rrrr rrr!
I...Isn't the White Hare of Inaba a story from the spring or summer?
This means that the "White Hare of Inaba" took place in midwinter.
During the age of myths, the only white hares were ones that changed their fur to camouflage with the snow.

I need to find a lodging and huddle under a heated table, or I'll freeze to death!
W...We've been to Hakuto Shrine, and we've got shots of the White Hare Coast! I think we ought to call it a day, Professor!
But you agreed with me, Professor!
You're the one who decided that we had to go to Inaba for the zodiac series, just because it's the year of the rabbit, Miss Ike. Consider this punishment for your facile idea.


WAAU GH!
It's alright. I've got it.
KUNIO!
Give it here!

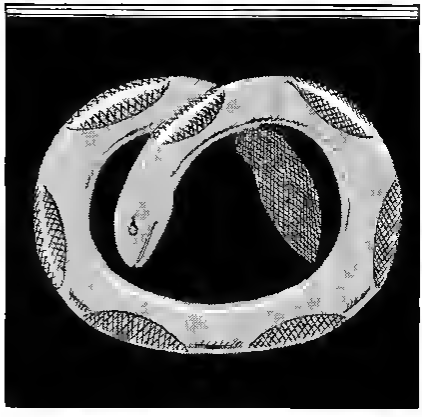
The chambered nautilus is native to the tropical ocean. What would its shell be doing on this coast..?
A chambered nautilus shell, I presume?
Come to think of it, I've heard that the same thing happens on Genkai Beach in Kyushu, near my hometown.
Some people make a collection of the things that drift ashore..
Seri!
A number of things drift up on the coast from the south in winter, as a result of ocean currents and seasonal winds.
Right... E...Excuse me...
Kunio, you need to change, or you'll catch a cold!
We're leaving!

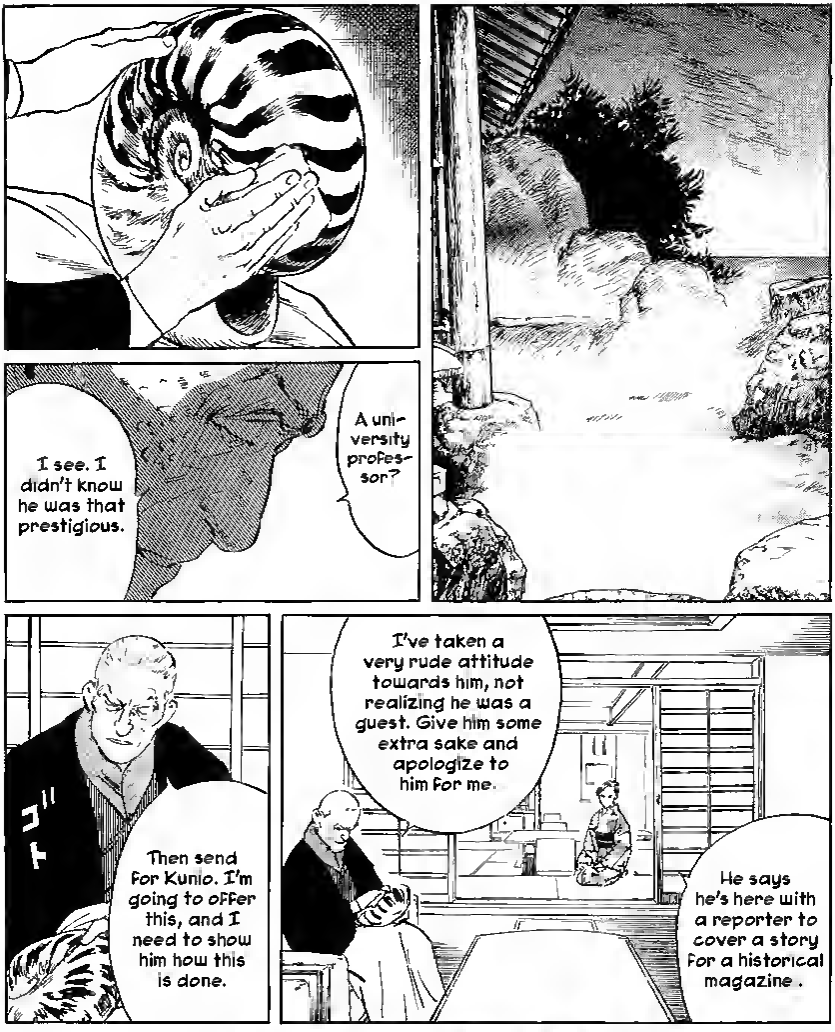
We run a hot-spring inn, you see.
It's just nearby. It's called "Waniya"...
Huh?
Are you tourists? If you still don't have a place to stay the night...
Waniya?
HOT SPRINGS!



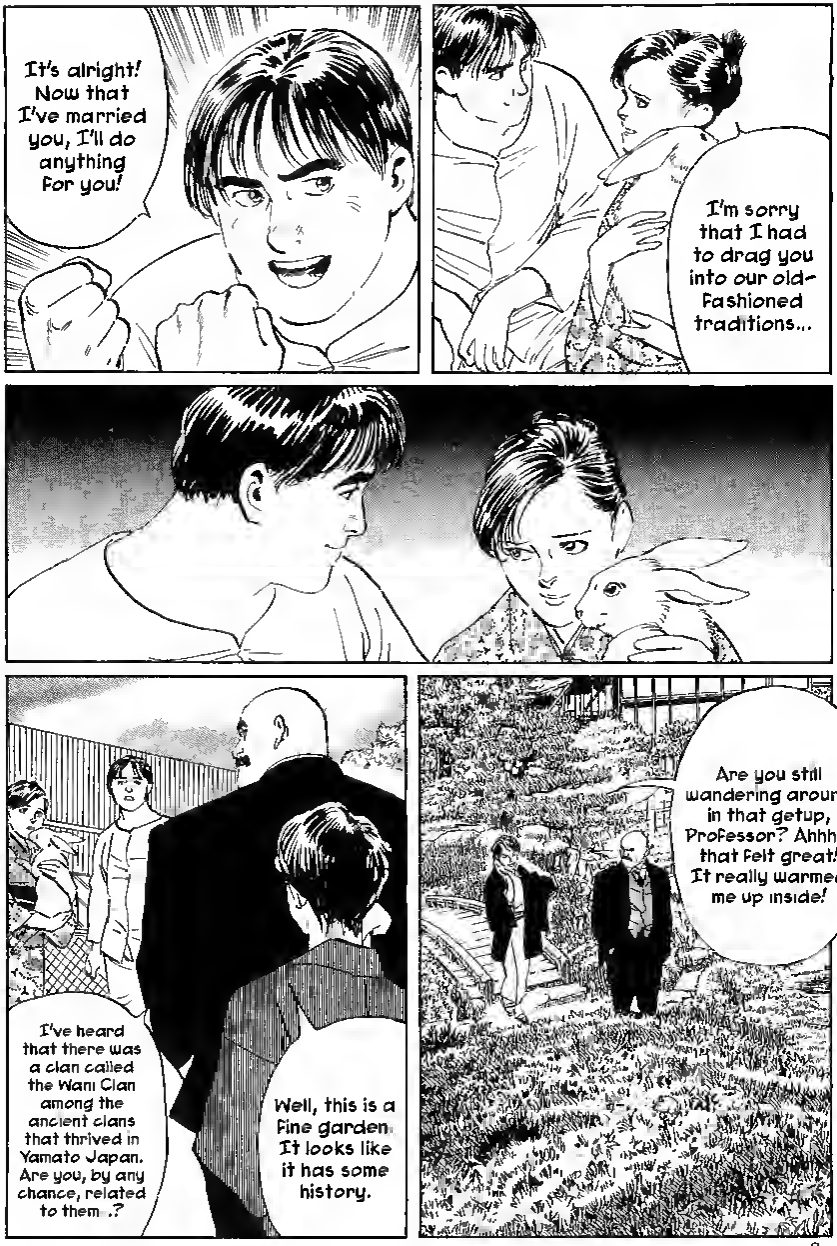
SIGN. WANIYA
The Hamamura hot spring is just down the road, and there are several other famous hot springs in the area

PROFESSOR! THEY HAVE AN OUTDOOR BATH!
That's not so much a shark as it is a sea serpent...




A university professor?
I see. I didn't know he was that prestigious.
He says he's here with a reporter to cover a story for a historical magazine.
I've taken a very rude attitude towards him, not realizing he was a guest. Give him some extra sake and apologize to him for me.
Then send for Kunio. I'm going to offer this, and I need to show him how this is done.
Yes, Father...

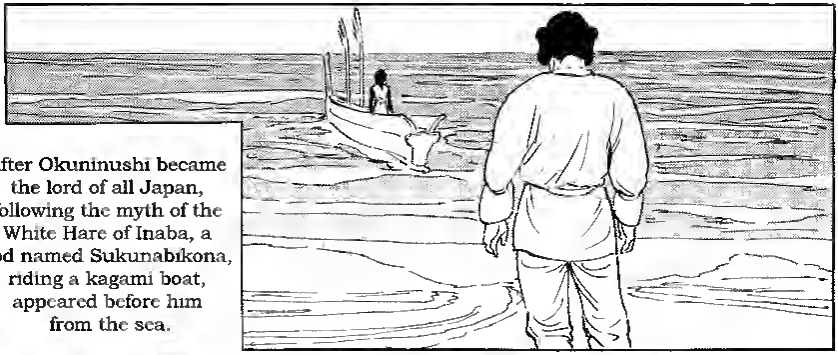
.....
URK
...
USA
Shiro...


It's alright! Now that I've married you, I'll do anything for you!
I'm sorry that I had to drag you into our old-fashioned traditions...
I've heard that there was a clan called the Wani Clan among the ancient clans that thrived in Yamato Japan. Are you, by any chance, related to them...?
Well, this is a fine garden. It looks like it has some history.
Are you still wandering around in that getup, Professor? Ahhhh, that felt great! It really warmed me up inside!

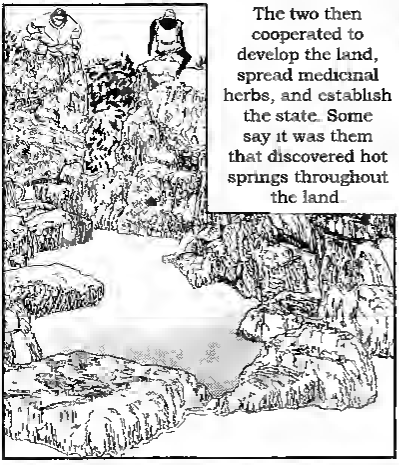
Ohhhh, it's so cute! Do you keep it?
Yes, though many people laugh at the fact that Waniya has a white rabbit.
Well, I do know this family can trace back to the Heian period..
But I just barely married into this family, so I still don't know anything about it. Hahaha..
Only in Sanskrit, it means the moon...
Our word for rabbit, "usagi", also exists in Sanskrit, the ancient language of India.
Huh?

You know the saying that rabbits pound rice on the moon? A similar saying is present in India, and it may have come over through China or Southeast Asia.
You could say the exact same thing of the White Hare of Inaba...
There's another legend where a rabbit tricks a soft-shelled tortoise to take him across the river, but he is discovered in the end and has his tail bitten off, and rabbits have had short tails ever since.
For instance, in Indonesia, there is a story of a Fawn that tricks a tribe of crocodiles to cross a river.

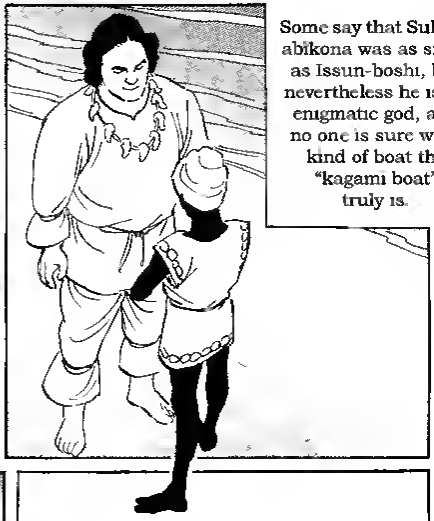
This means that it was not the rabbit that crossed the sea, but the legend...
The people who told the legend!
It's an established fact that legends with a similar pattern spread throughout East Asia and arrived in Japan.
Do you think these people might've washed up on the shore of Inaba, like that nautilus?
.....
It's sufficiently possible! And there is evidence.
If you want evidence in mythology, there is the myth of "Sukunabikona".



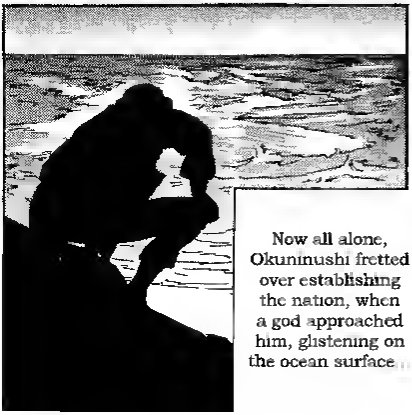
After Okuninushi became the lord of all Japan, following the myth of the White Hare of Inaba, a god named Sukunabikona, riding a kagami boat, appeared before him from the sea.



The two then cooperated to develop the land, spread medicinal herbs, and establish the state. Some say it was them that discovered hot springs throughout the land.

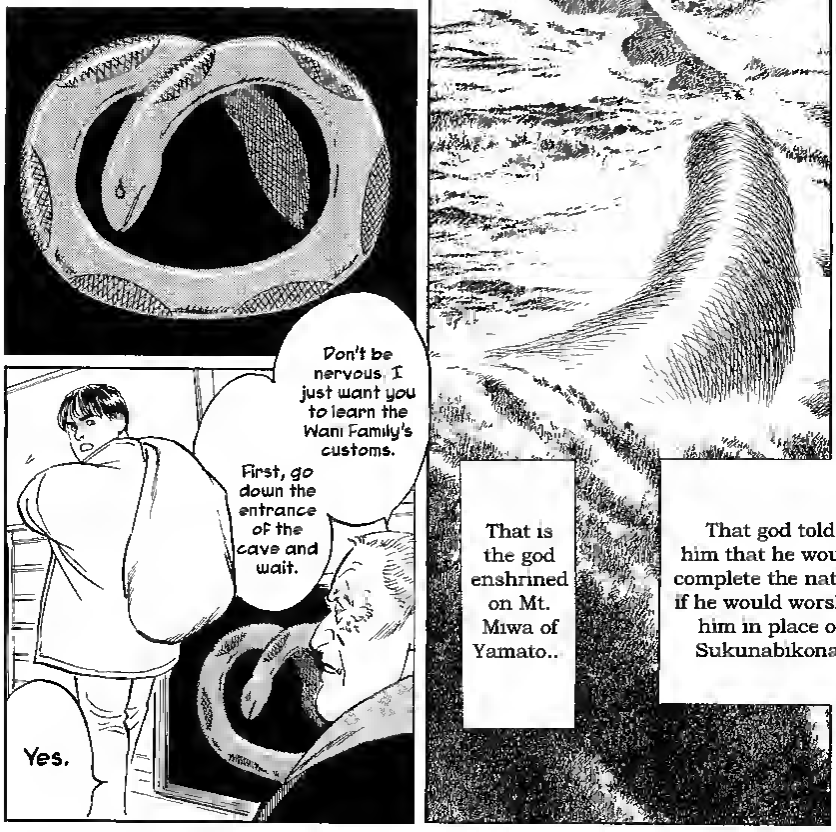


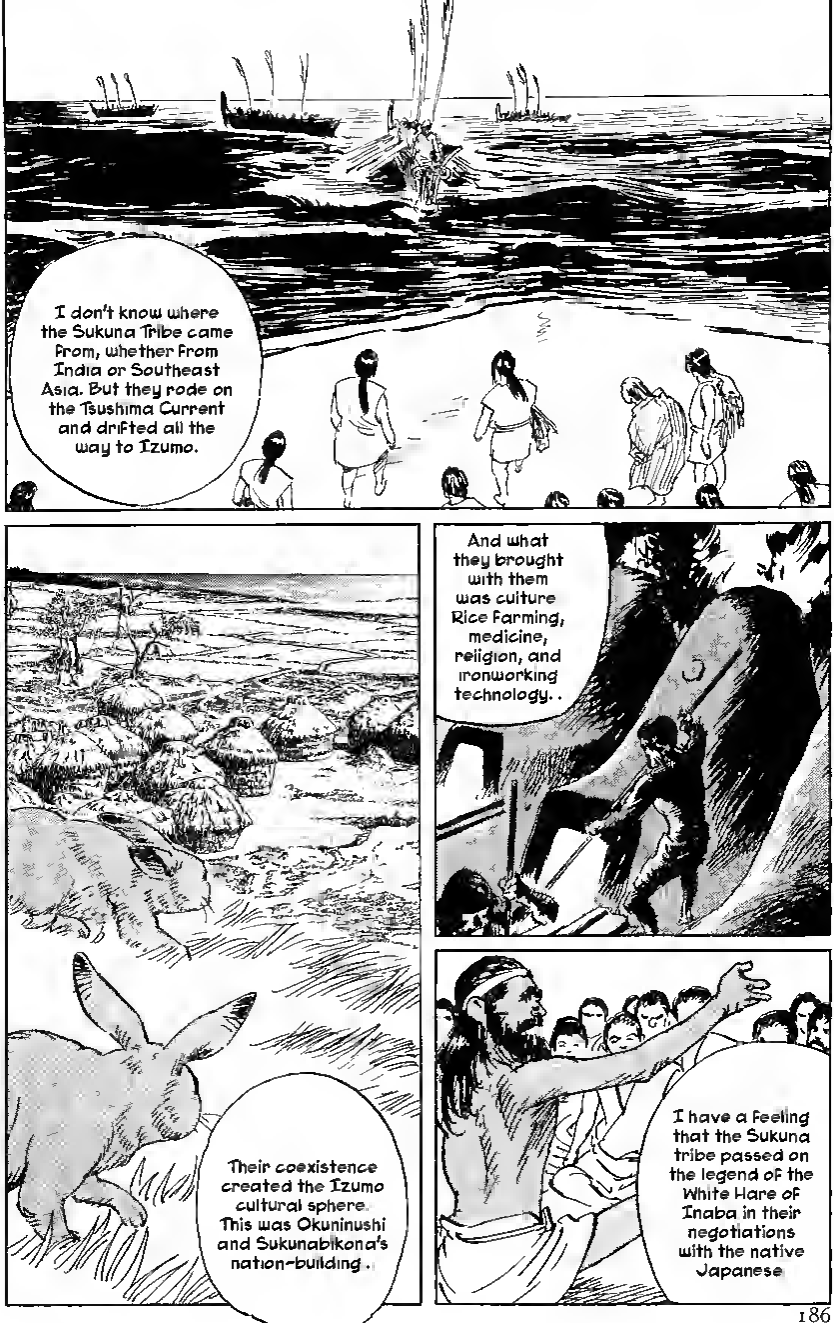
Some say that Sukunabikona was as small as Issun-boshi, but nevertheless he is an enigmatic god, and no one is sure what kind of boat the "kagami boat" truly is.

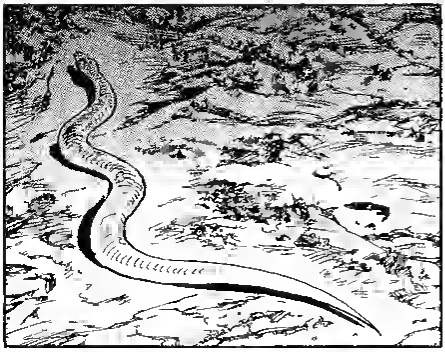


Now all alone, Okuninushi fretted over establishing the nation, when a god approached him, glistening on the ocean surface.

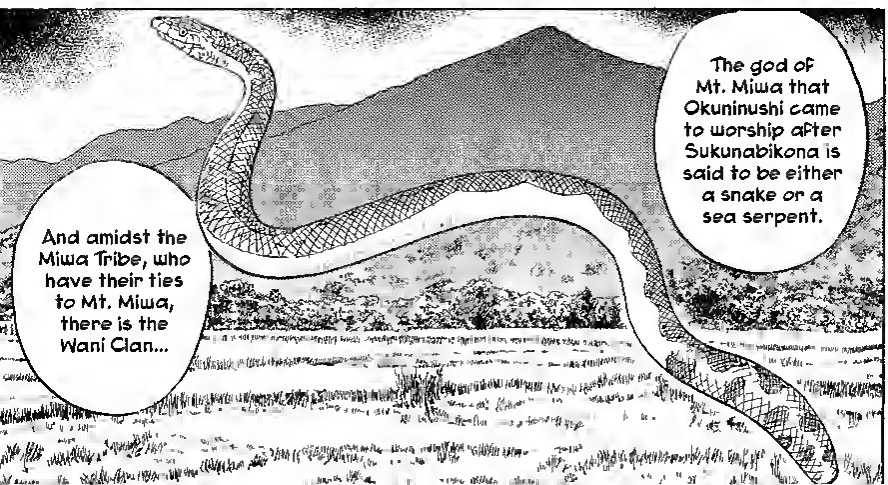
But one day, Sukunabikona suddenly left for a distant land. His disappearance was just as enigmatic as his appearance.


That god told him that he would complete the nation if he would worship him in place of Sukunabikona.
That is the god enshrined on Mt. Miwa of Yamato..
Don't be nervous. I just want you to learn the Wani Family's customs.
First, go down the entrance of the cave and wait.
Yes.
I believe that one day long ago, a group that you could call the "Sukuna Tribe" drifted ashore in the Izumo region.
Sukuna Tribe?

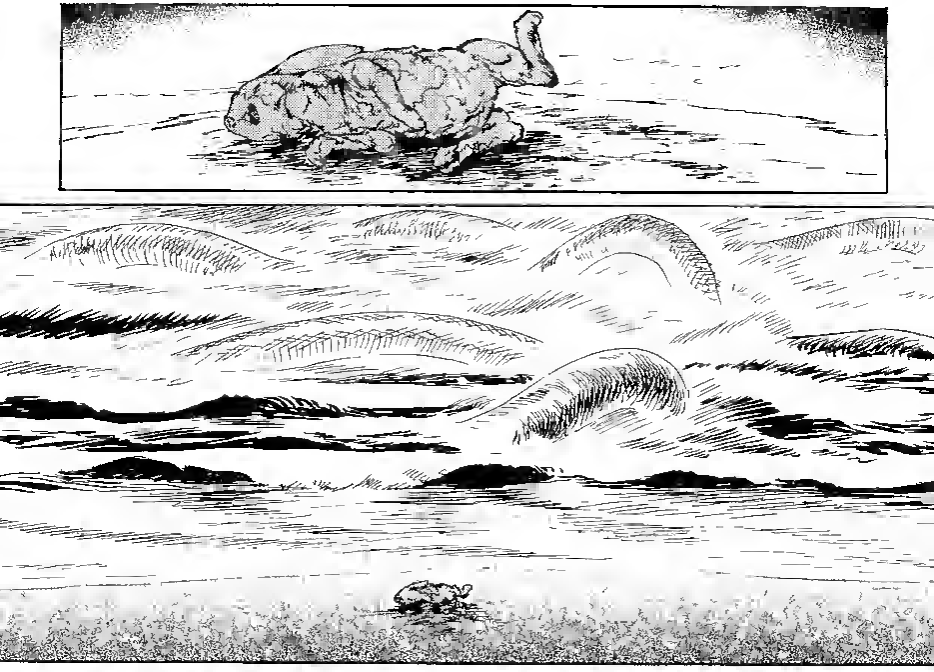

I don't know where the Sukuna Tribe came from, whether from India or Southeast Asia. But they rode on the Tsushima Current and drifted all the way to Izumo.
And what they brought with them was culture Rice farming, medicine, religion, and ironworking technology. .
Their coexistence created the Izumo cultural sphere. This was Okuninushi and Sukunabikona's nation-building .
I have a feeling that the Sukuna tribe passed on the legend of the White Hare of Inaba in their negotiations with the native Japanese



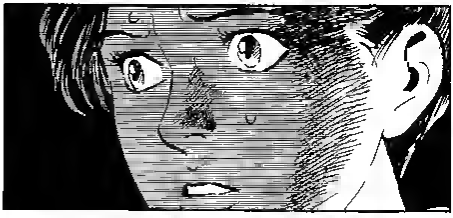
URK...


The god of Mt. Miwa that Okuninushi came to worship after Sukunabikona is said to be either a snake or a sea serpent.
And amidst the Miwa Tribe, who have their ties to Mt. Miwa, there is the Wani Clan...

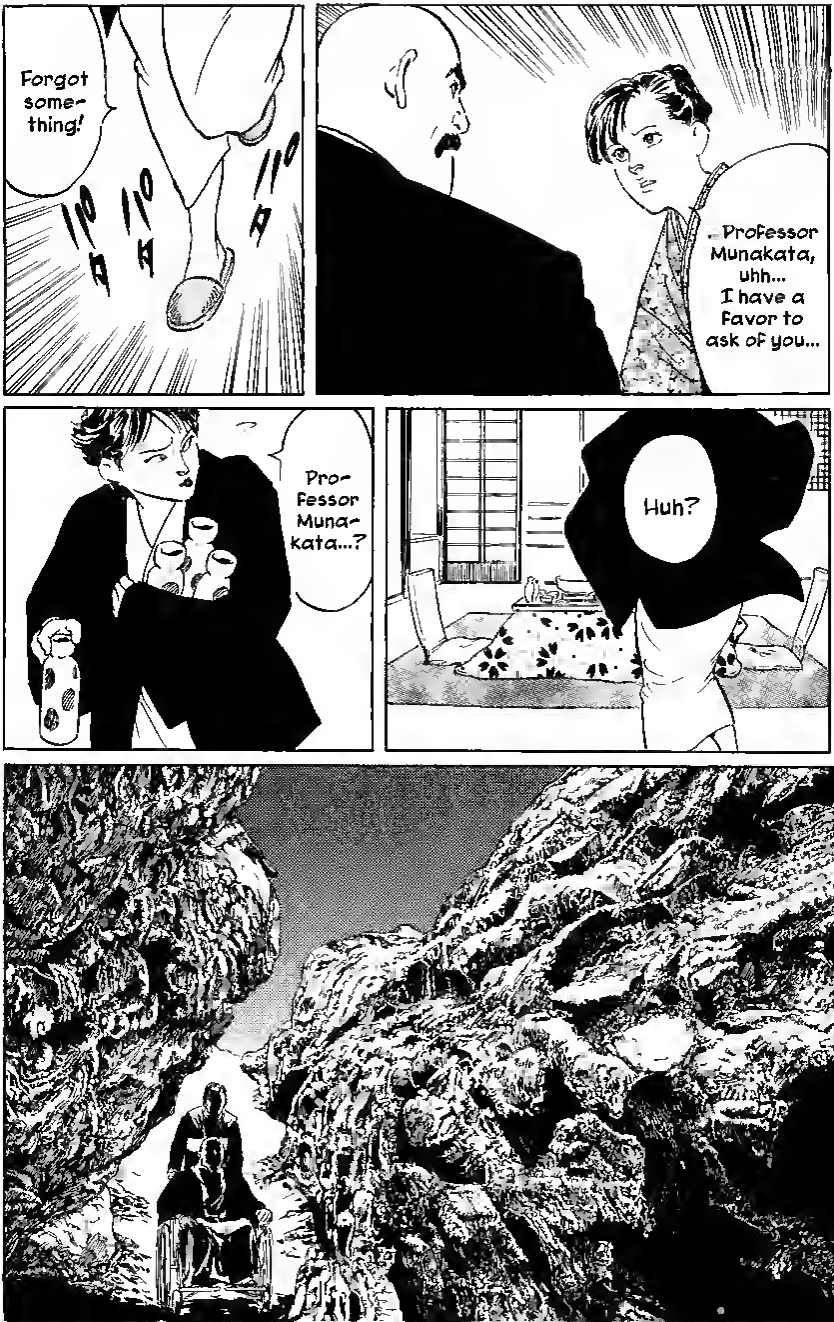
The "heavenly tribes", who would later go on to create the Imperial Court, gathered in Yamato. And they were most likely one of them.
It's an ancient tale.
THE WANI CLAN ...?
The myth states that Okuninushi yielded the nation to these heavenly tribes.
Suwa
Izumo/Inaba
Hida
Yamato
Okuninushi's son Takeminakata resisted, but was defeated and fled to Suwa.
The Sukuna tribe vanished, just as Sukunabikona had
The civilization that thrived in Izumo may have been scattered and annihilated by the heavenly tribes.

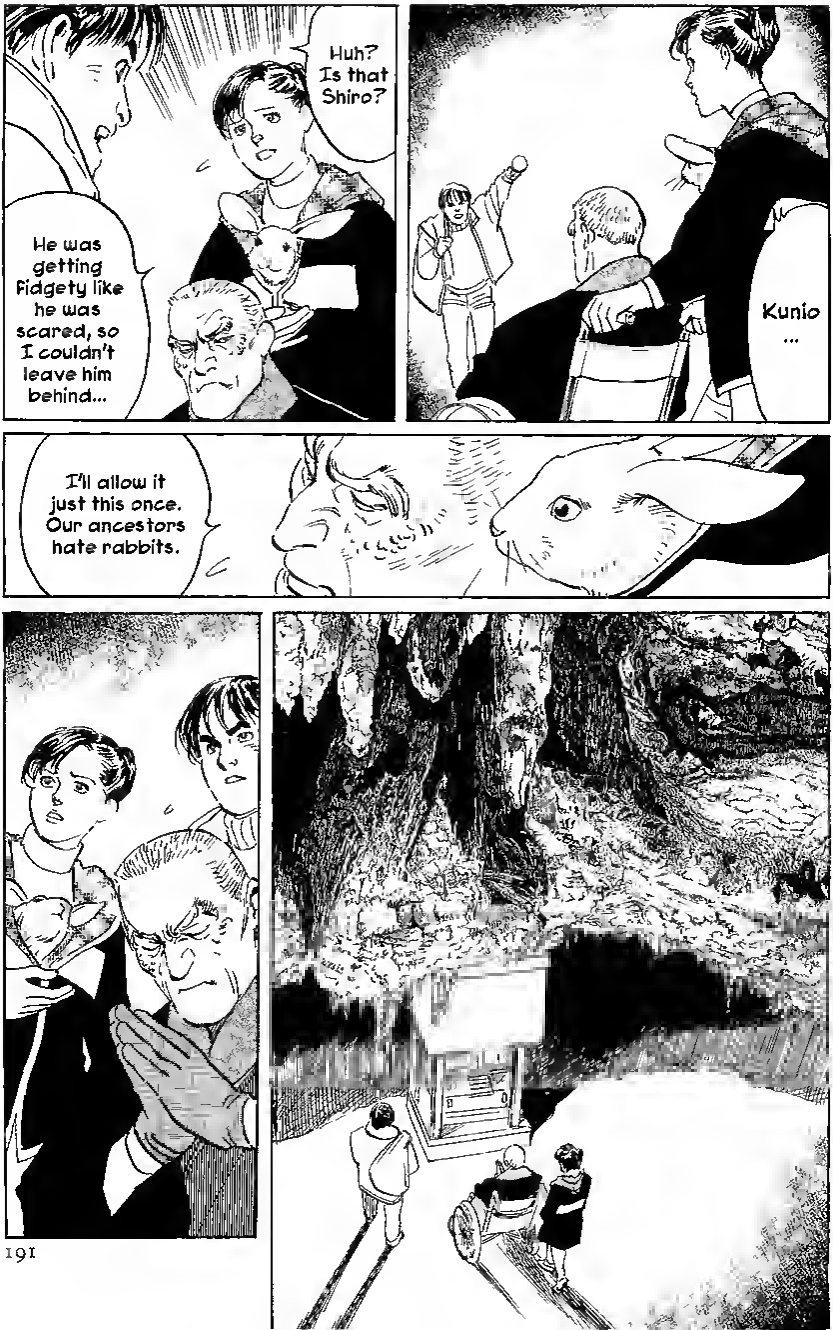


Sukunabikona must've discovered this hot spring, too!
I'm gonna go in there one more time! They say it's good for your skin!



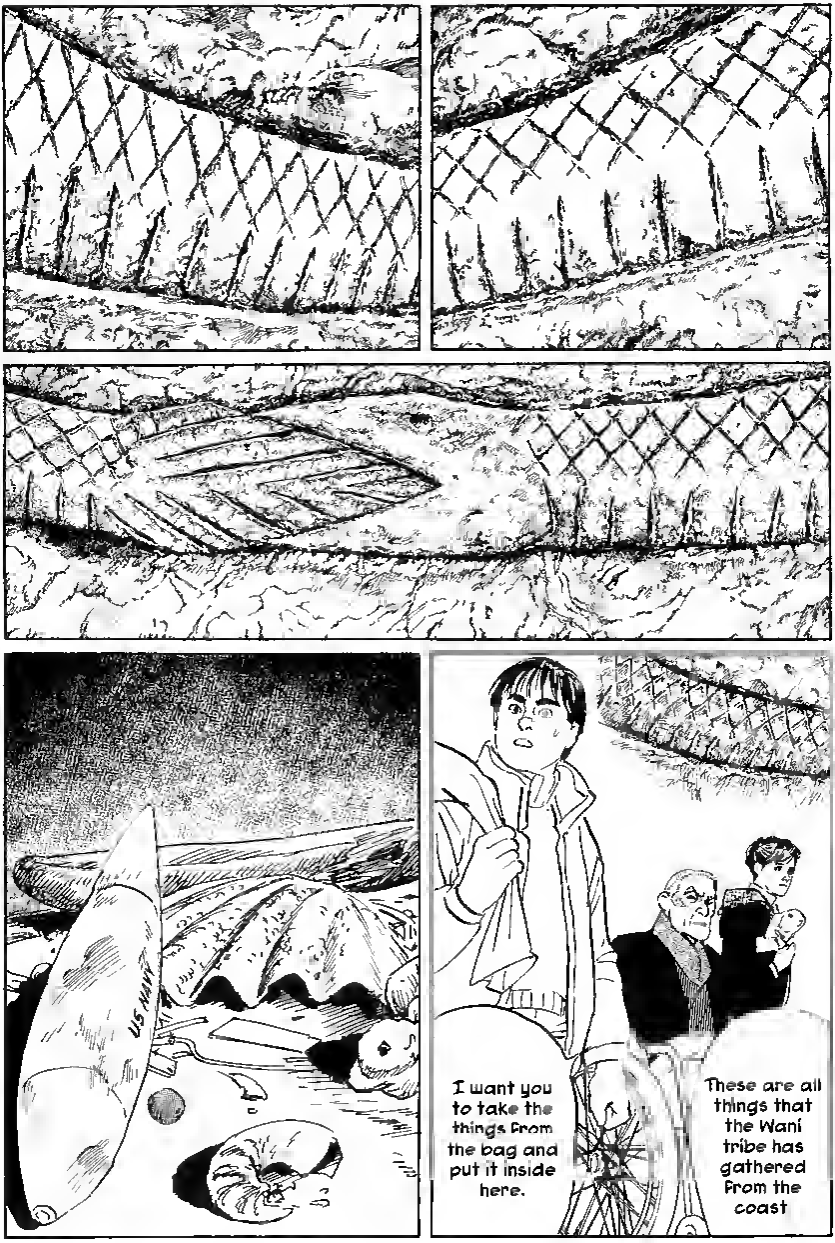
I've hated the name "Wani" ever since I was a child...


Forgot some-thing!
...Professor Munakata, uhh... I have a favor to ask of you...
Pro-fessor Muna-kata...?
Huh?


Huh? Is that Shiro?
He was getting fidgety like he was scared, so I couldn't leave him behind...
Kunio ...
I'll allow it just this once. Our ancestors hate rabbits.

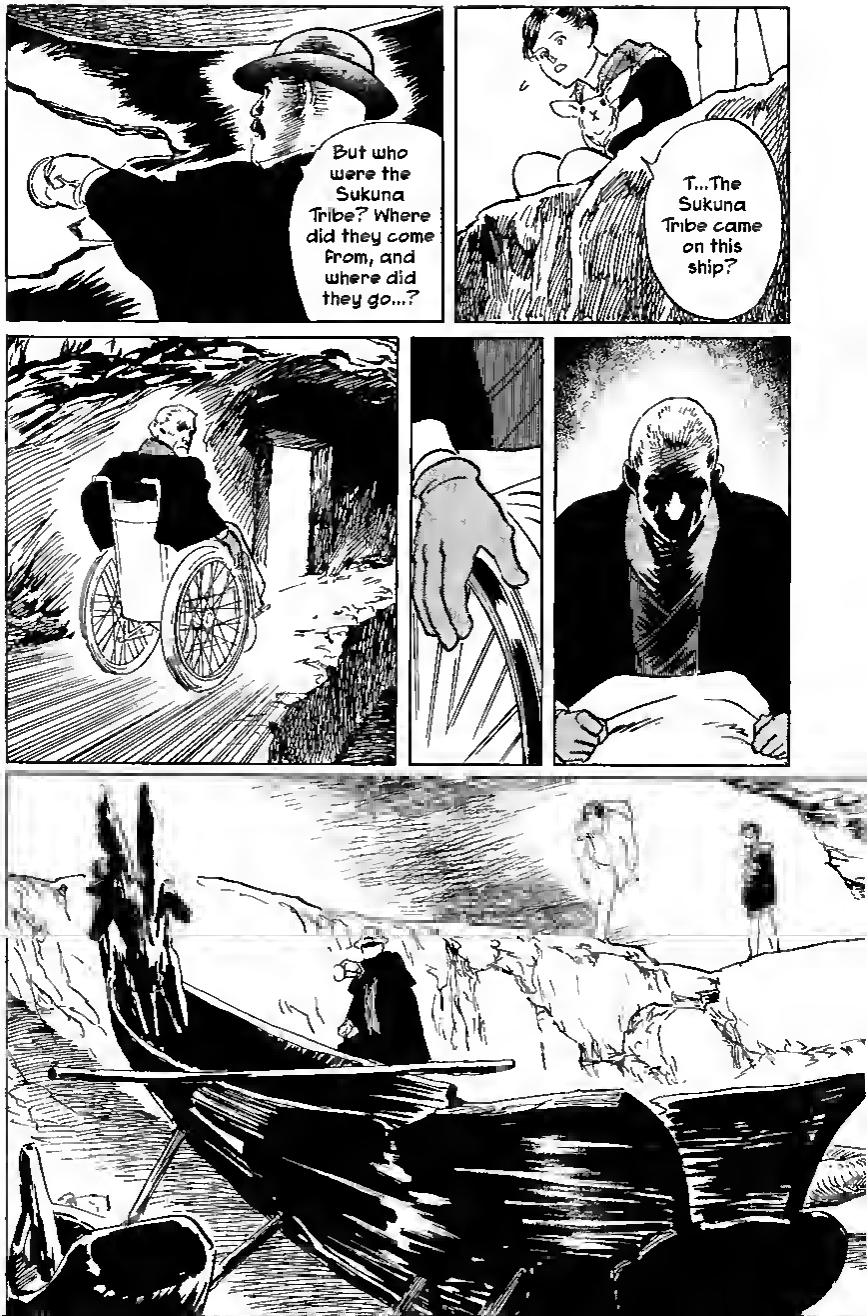
Huh?
You look pretty strong. Grab the left pillar and pull it as hard as you can.
KCH HH...

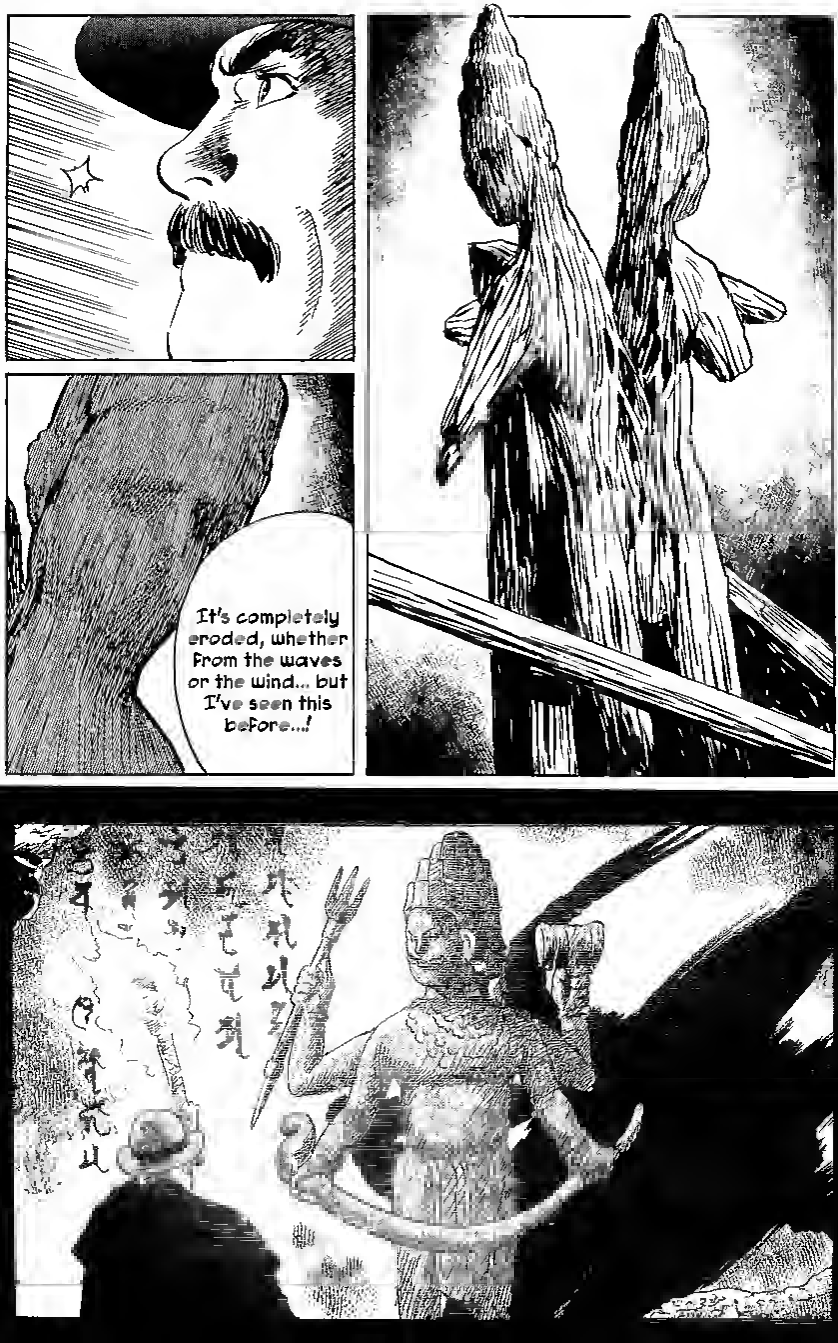
Mr Rabbit, Mr Rabbit, what are you hopping from...
Ahhhhhh, this feels good!
Now this is the life!
I've always wanted to do this!

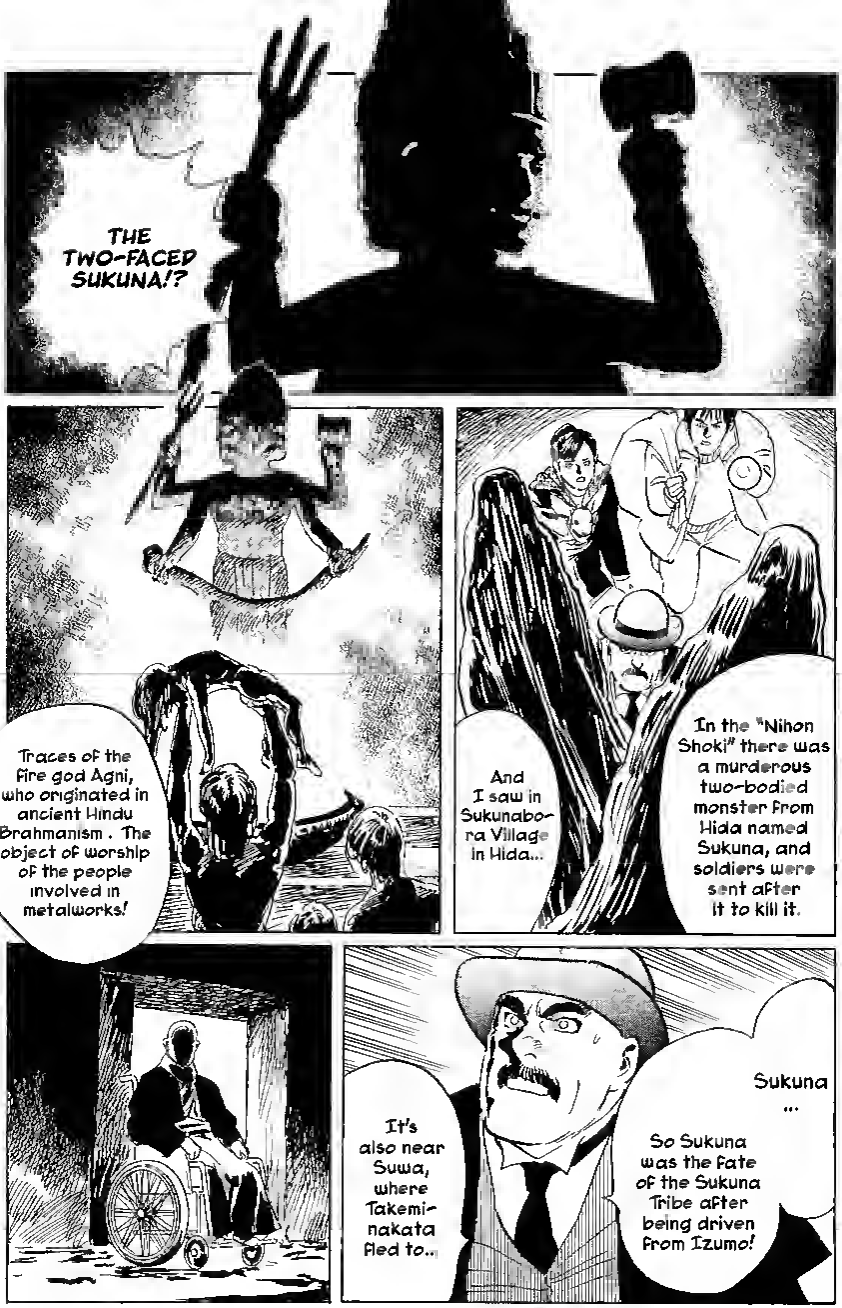

USS NAVY
I want you to take the things from the bag and put it inside here.
These are all things that the Wani tribe has gathered from the coast

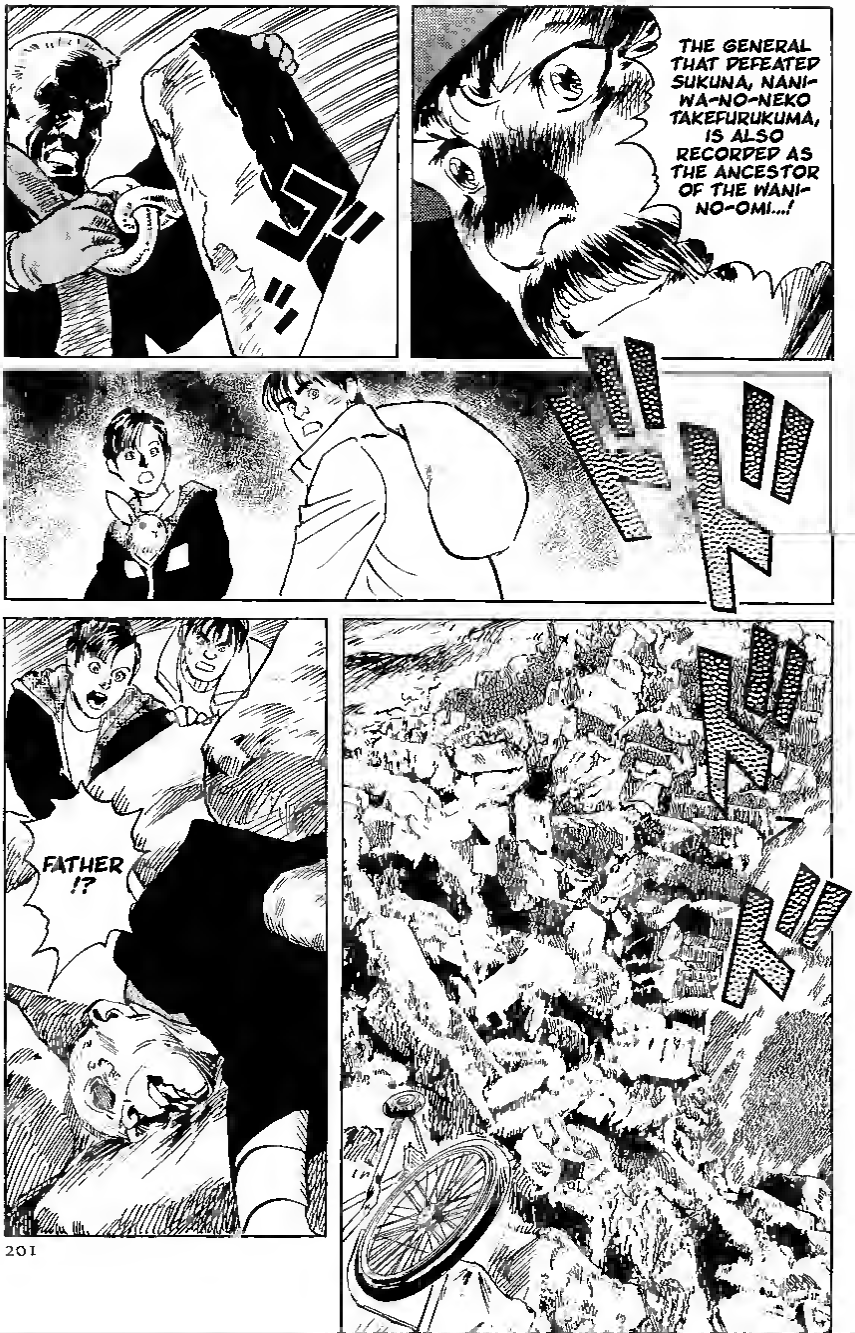
There are even sutras we brought out from shipwrecked T'ang ships, and unidentified idols...
When winter comes, coconuts, shells, and southern ships drift ashore...
It is our duty to gather them all up, without remainder, and offer them to our ancestors of the Wani Clan.
For what?
Allow me to take a look in here.

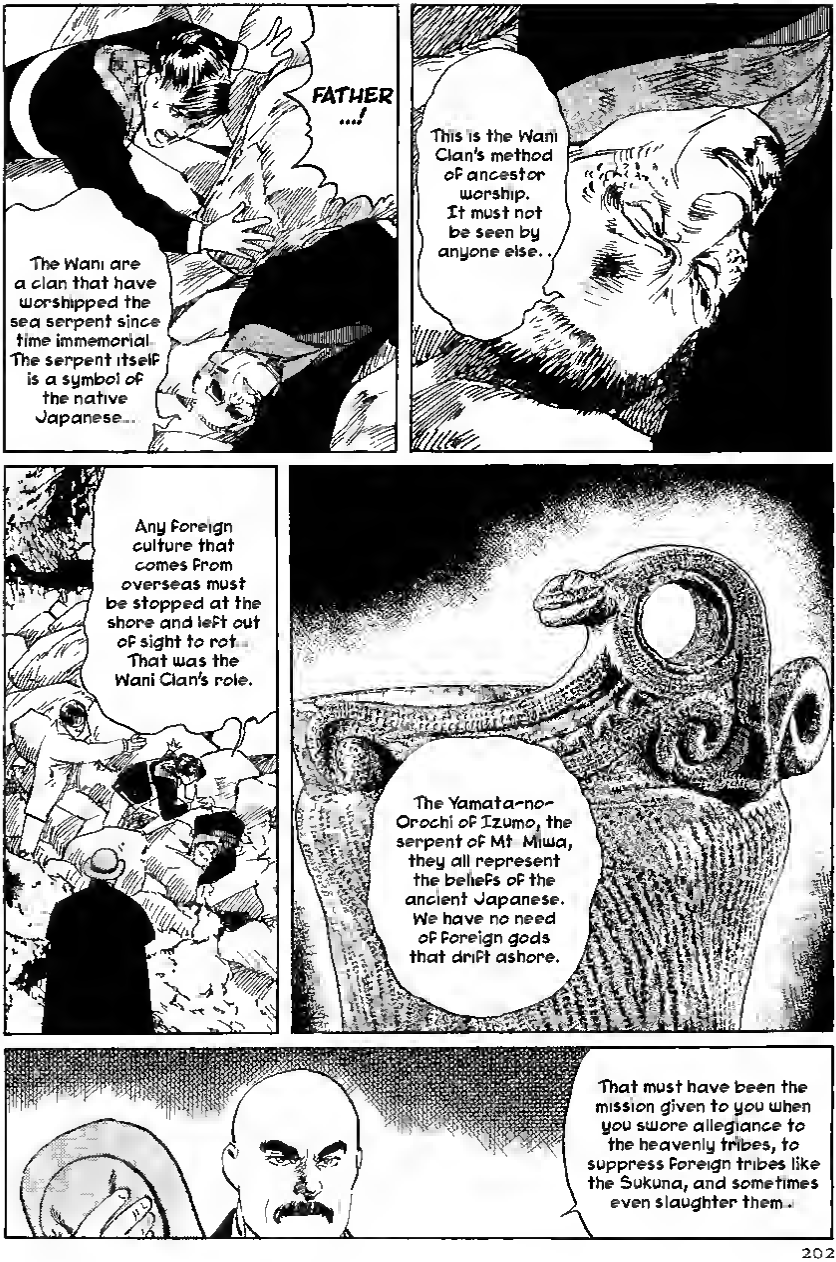
SERI!
Father! You can't let Kunio inherit this meaningless tradition!
I'M GOING TO HAVE PROFESSOR MUNAKATA CONDUCT AN OPEN INVESTIGATION! THERE MAY BE SOME THINGS HERE THAT ARE ACADEMICALLY VALUABLE!
WHAT!?
This is the Sukuna Tribe's boat!
A ship with a black luster like a mirror... It's written as "rama boat" yet pronounced "kagami boat"...
One theory states that the kagami boat that Sukunabikona rode on was made of an ebony tree used in palace construction, which the Polynesians called "rama"

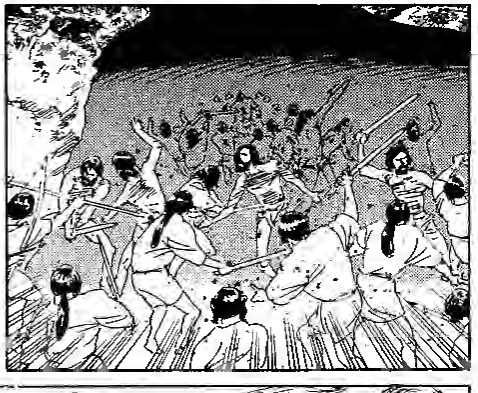

But who were the Sukuna Tribe? Where did they come from, and where did they go...?
T...The Sukuna Tribe came on this ship?


It's completely eroded, whether from the waves or the wind... but I've seen this before...!

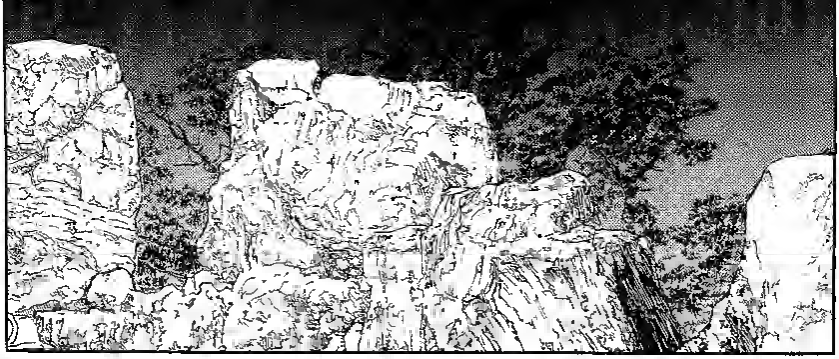

THE TWO-FACED SUKUNA!?
Traces of the fire god Agni, who originated in ancient Hindu Brahmanism. The object of worship of the people involved in metalworks!
And I saw in Sukunabora Village in Hida...
In the "Nihon Shoki" there was a murderous two-bodied monster from Hida named Sukuna, and soldiers were sent after it to kill it.
It's also near Suwa, where Takeminakata fled to...
Sukuna ...
So Sukuna was the fate of the Sukuna Tribe after being driven from Izumo!

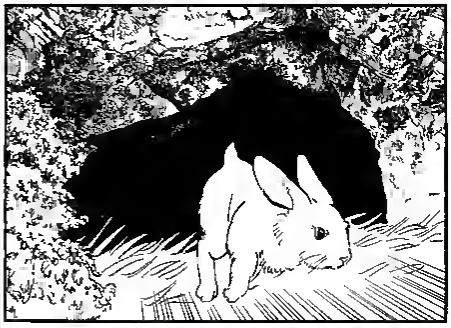

THE GENERAL THAT DEFEATED SUKUNA, NANI-WA-NO-NEKO TAKEFURUKUMA, IS ALSO RECORDED AS THE ANCESTOR OF THE WANI-NO-OMI...!
FATHER !?


FATHER ...!
The Wani are a clan that have worshipped the sea serpent since time immemorial. The serpent itself is a symbol of the native Japanese...
This is the Wani Clan's method of ancestor worship. It must not be seen by anyone else..
Any foreign culture that comes from overseas must be stopped at the shore and left out of sight to rot... That was the Wani Clan's role.
The Yamata-no-Orochi of Izumo, the serpent of Mt. Miwa, they all represent the beliefs of the ancient Japanese. We have no need of foreign gods that drift ashore.
That must have been the mission given to you when you swore allegiance to the heavenly tribes, to suppress foreign tribes like the Sukuna, and sometimes even slaughter them..



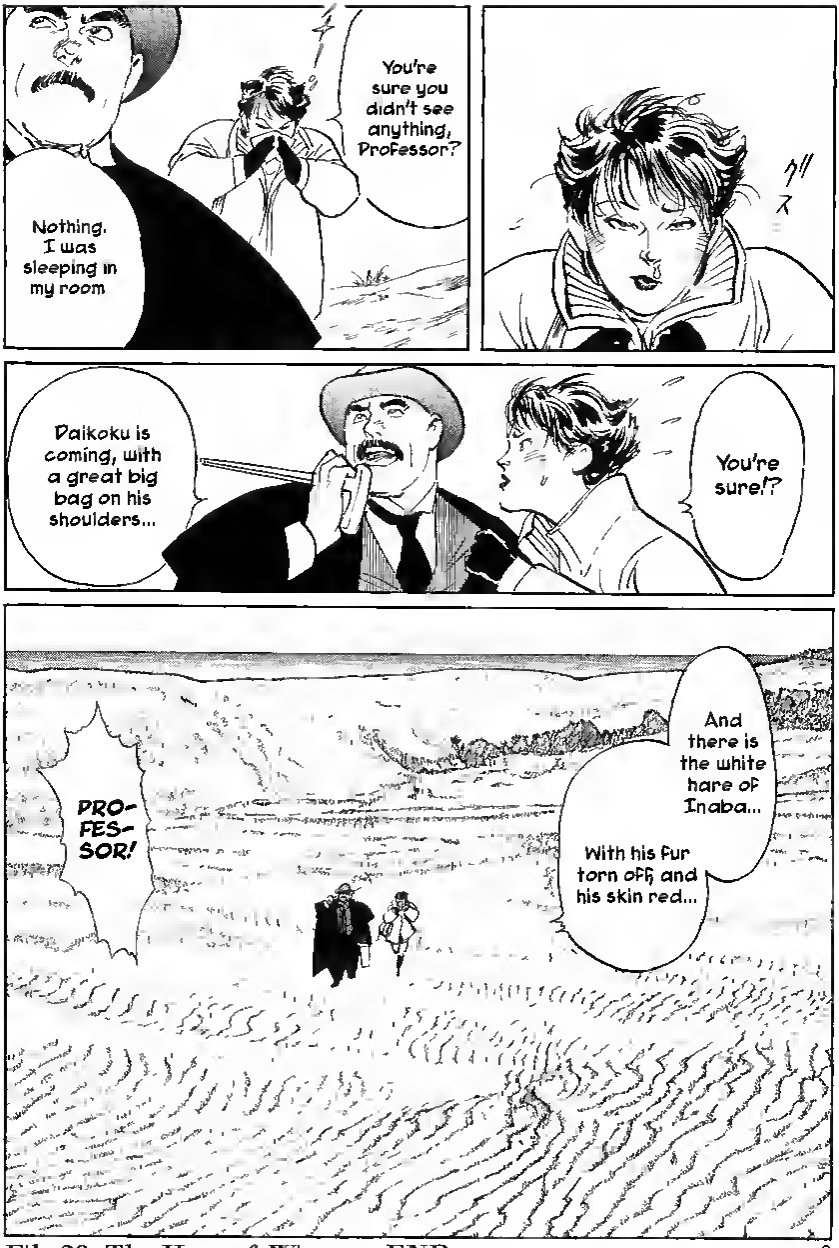
Relax. There is an escape route for you.
Shiro, sniff out the outside air...
I'M SORRY, FATHER... THIS IS ALL MY FAULT...
I... didn't have much longer to live, anyway...
FATHER!
FATHER !!





.....
...I'll leave the drifted objects as they are. That's the will of Wani Jisaburo.

I see...
We will tell this all to our children, and leave it to their judgment.
HUH ?

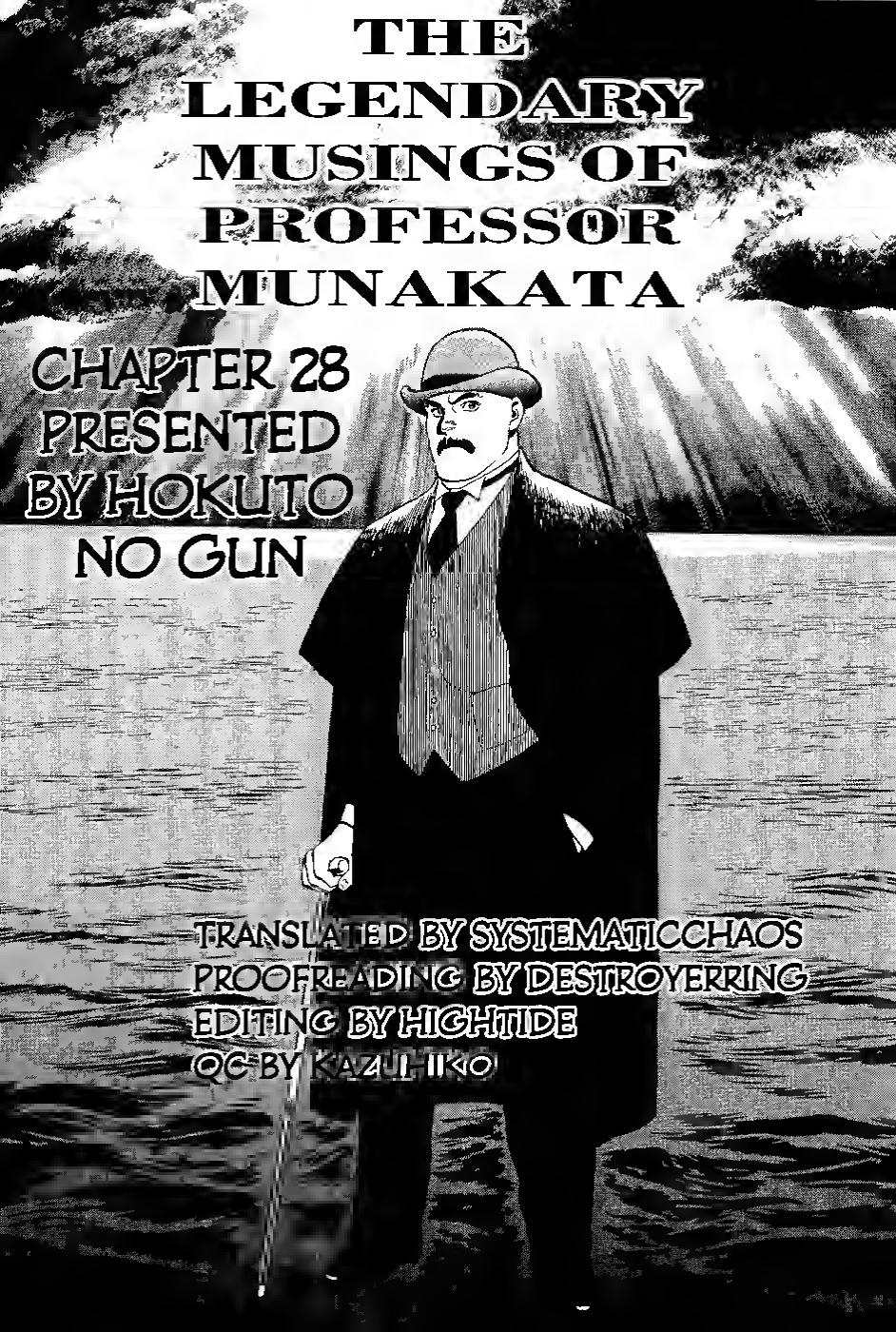

You're sure you didn't see anything, Professor?
Nothing. I was sleeping in my room
Daikoku is coming, with a great big bag on his shoulders...
You're sure!?
And there is the white hare of Inaba...
With his fur torn off, and his skin red...
PRO-FES-SOR!

File 28: The Hare of Winter – END

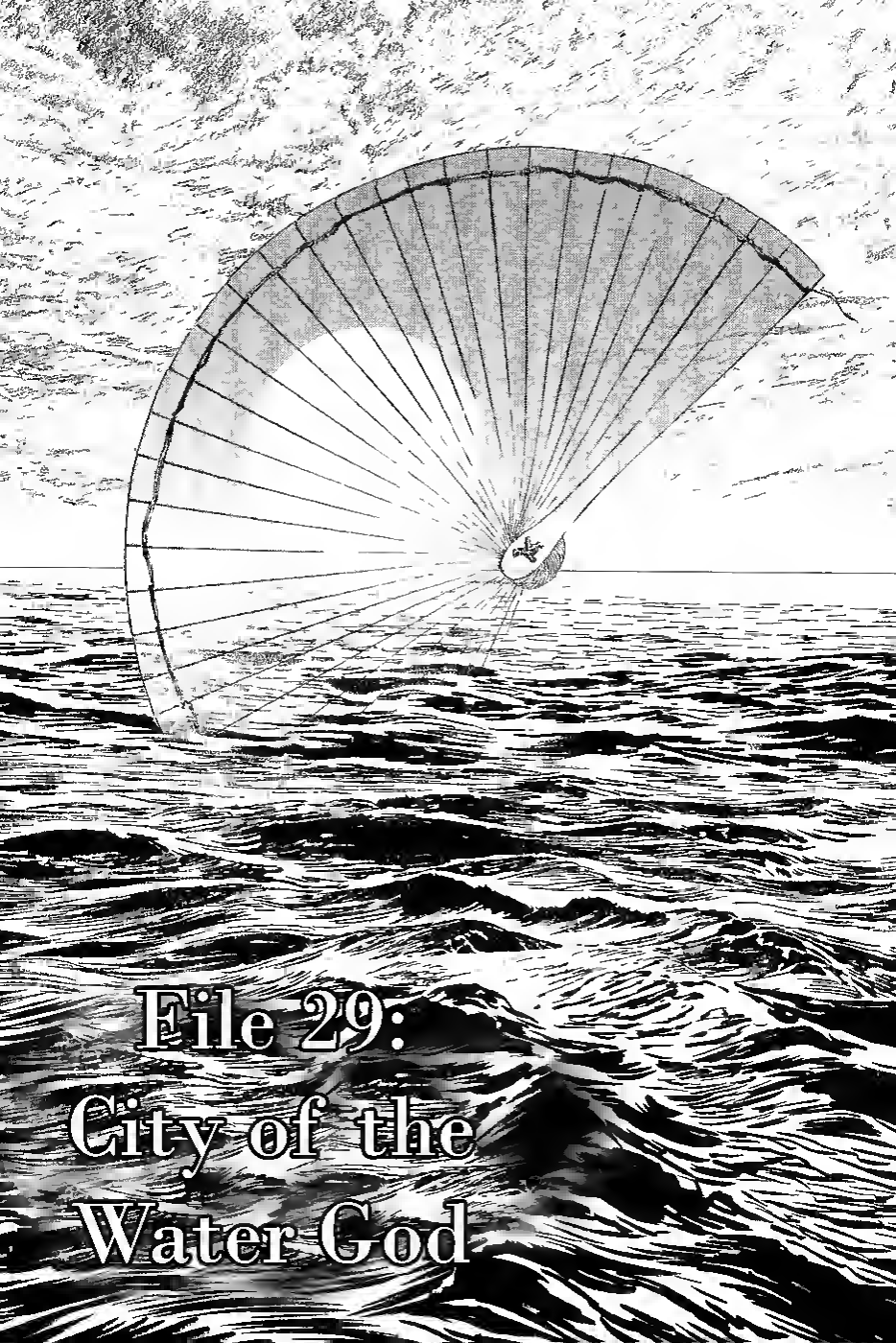
THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 28

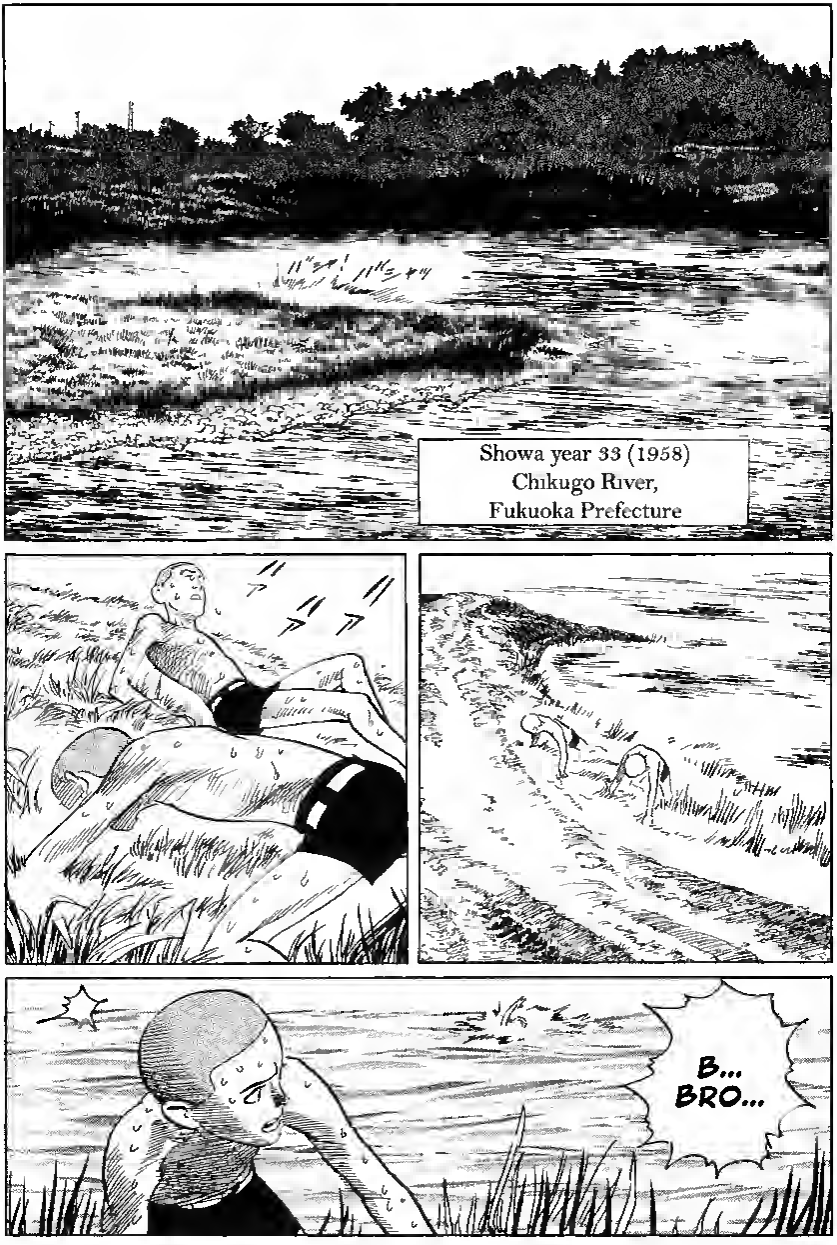
PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN

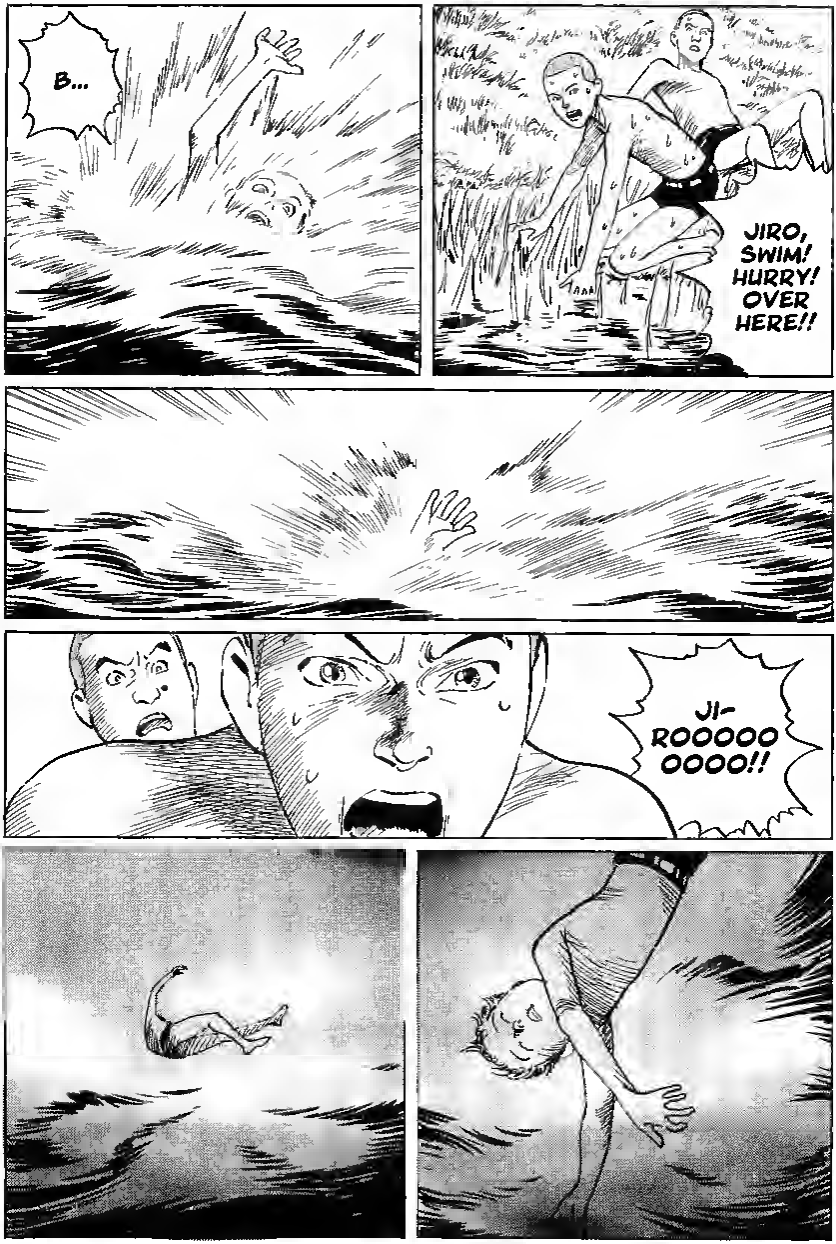


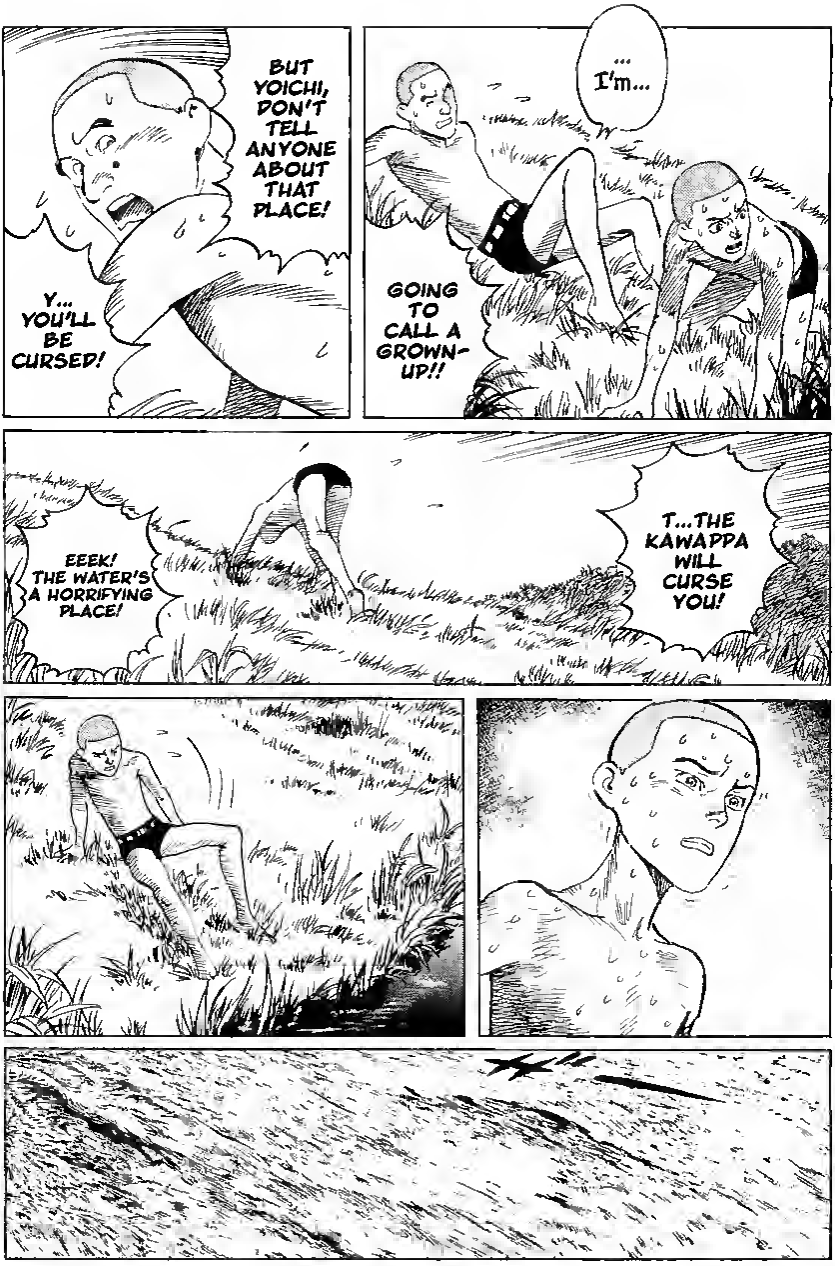
TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFREADING BY DESTROYERRING
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO



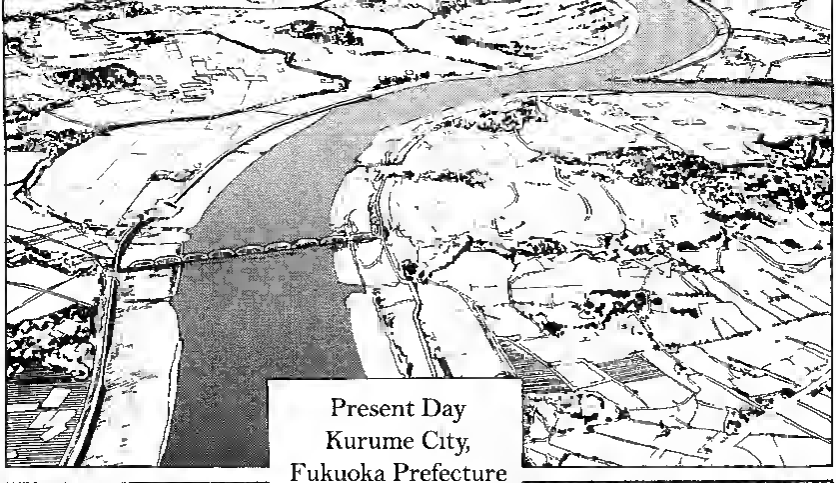
File 29: City of the Water God

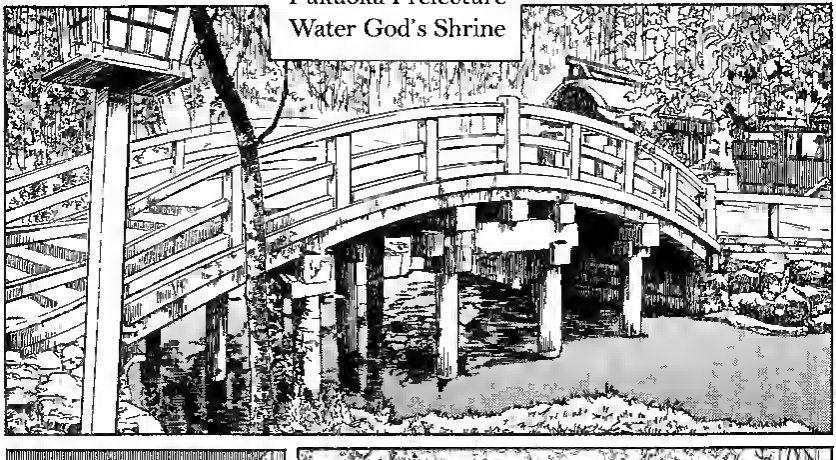

Showa year 33 (1958)
Chikugo River,
Fukuoka Prefecture
B...
BRO...

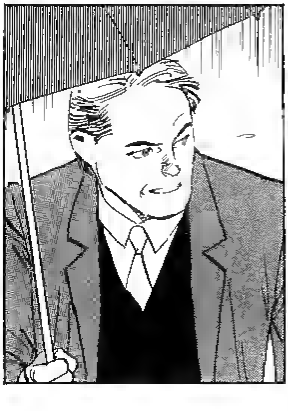

B...
JIRO, SWIM! HURRY! OVER HERE!!
JI-ROOOOOOOO!!


BUT YOICHI, DON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT THAT PLACE!
Y... YOU'LL BE CURSED!
...
I'm...
GOING TO CALL A GROWN-UP!!
EEEK! THE WATER'S A HORRIFYING PLACE!
T...THE KAWAPPA WILL CURSE YOU!

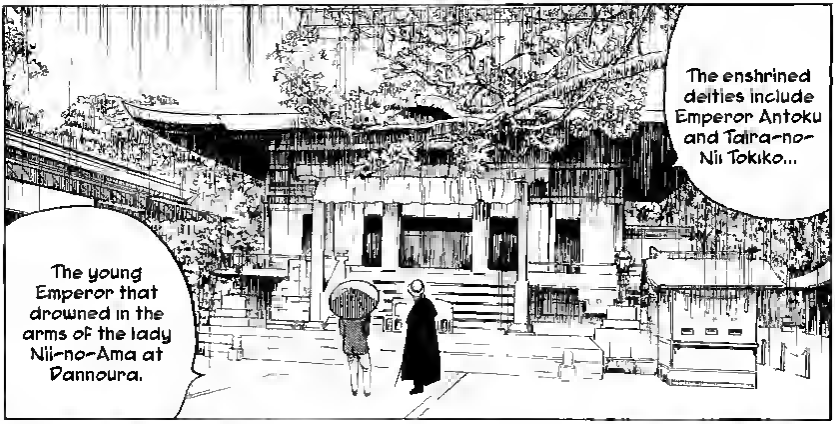
Hey! You find him yet?
Not yet!

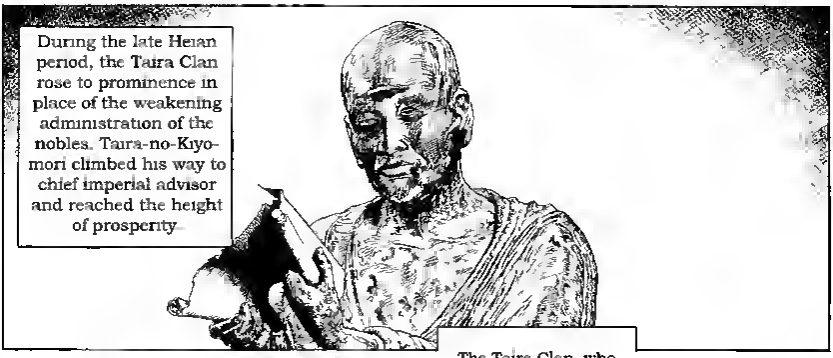

Present Day
Kurume City,
Fukuoka Prefecture
Water God's Shrine

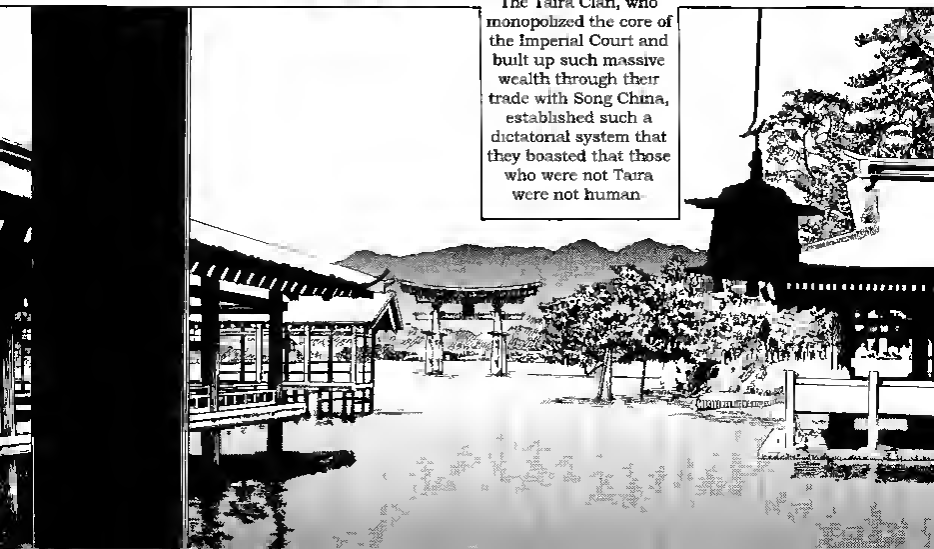


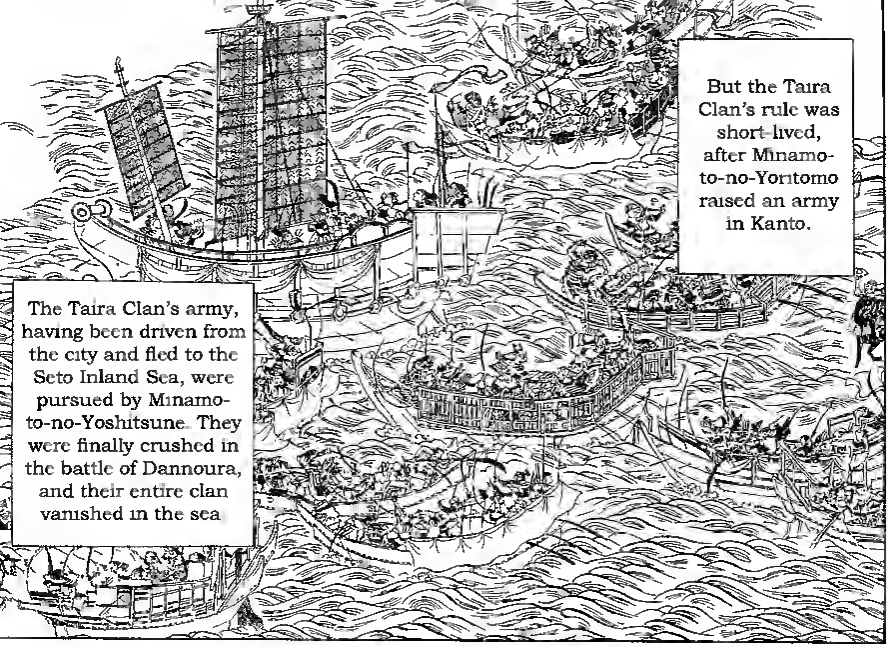


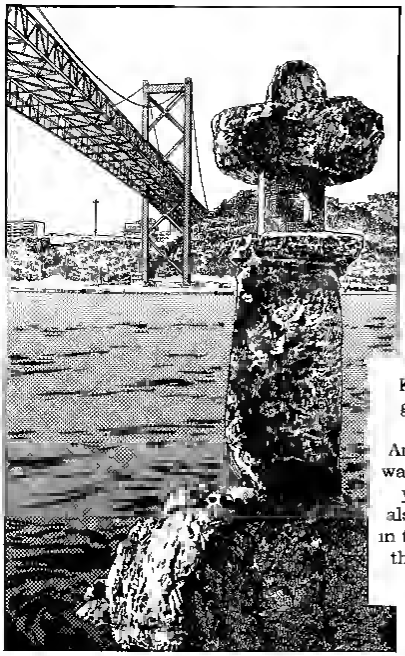
Muna-
kata!
It's really been a long time, Fujimura. Have you been here since you graduated high school?
Yes. I came back since my parents were from here originally. I lived here up until elementary school, too.
I'm sorry about the late notice because I know you're a busy man, but I read in the newspaper that you were coming to Kurume for a lecture.
Oh, I'm not busy at all. I thought I'd stop by the Water God's Shrine while I was here.
This shrine on the banks of the Chikugo River is the supreme shrine for all the Water God Shrines around the nation. I'm from Fukuoka myself, and I never knew that until just recently.

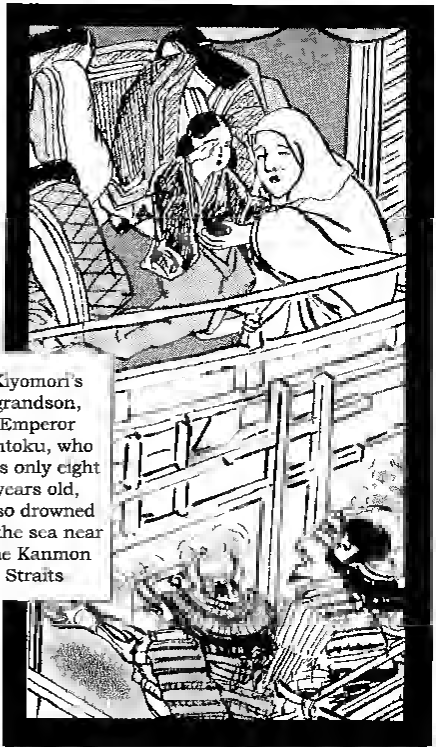

The enshrined deities include Emperor Antoku and Taira-no-Nii Tokiko...
The young Emperor that drowned in the arms of the lady Nii-no-Ama at Dannoura.

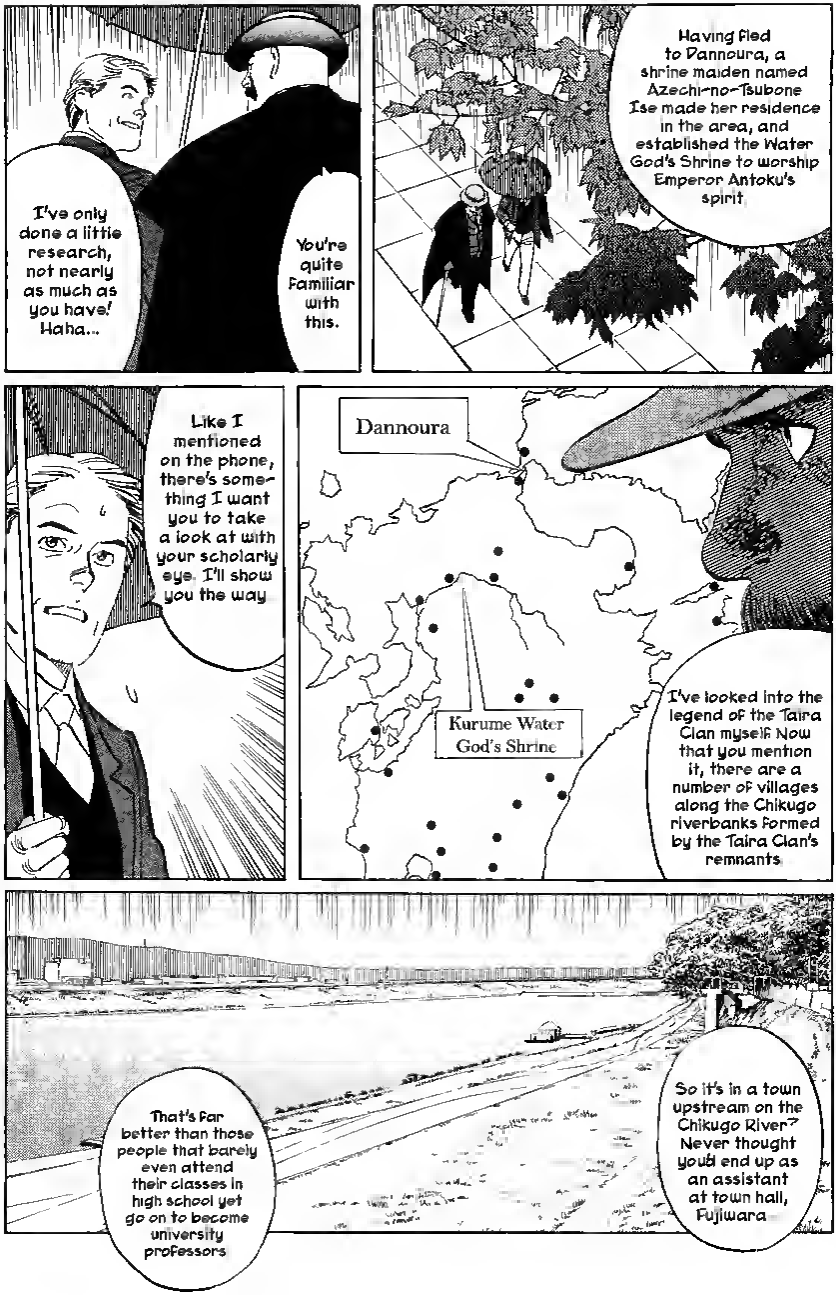

During the late Heian period, the Taira Clan rose to prominence in place of the weakening administration of the nobles. Taira-no-Kiyomori climbed his way to chief imperial advisor and reached the height of prosperity.


The Taira Clan, who monopolized the core of the Imperial Court and built up such massive wealth through their trade with Song China, established such a dictatorial system that they boasted that those who were not Taira were not human.

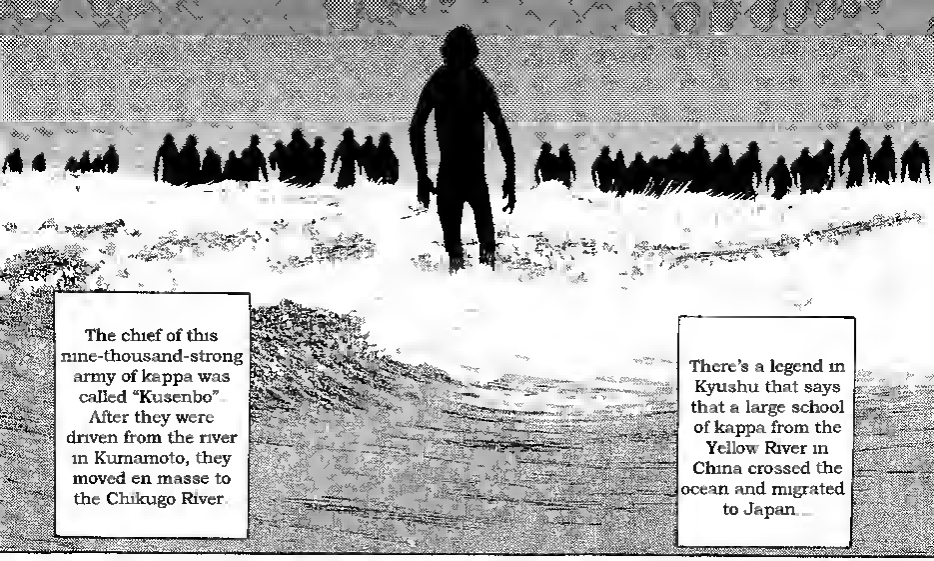

But the Taira Clan's rule was short-lived, after Minamoto-no-Yoritomo raised an army in Kanto.
The Taira Clan's army, having been driven from the city and fled to the Seto Inland Sea, were pursued by Minamoto-no-Yoshitsune. They were finally crushed in the battle of Dannoura, and their entire clan vanished in the sea.



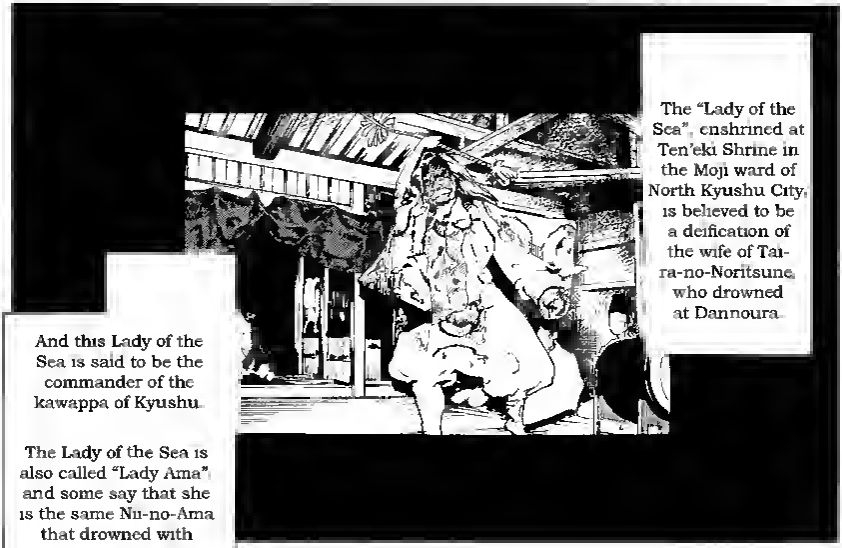

Kiyomori's grandson, Emperor Antoku, who was only eight years old, also drowned in the sea near the Kanmon Straits

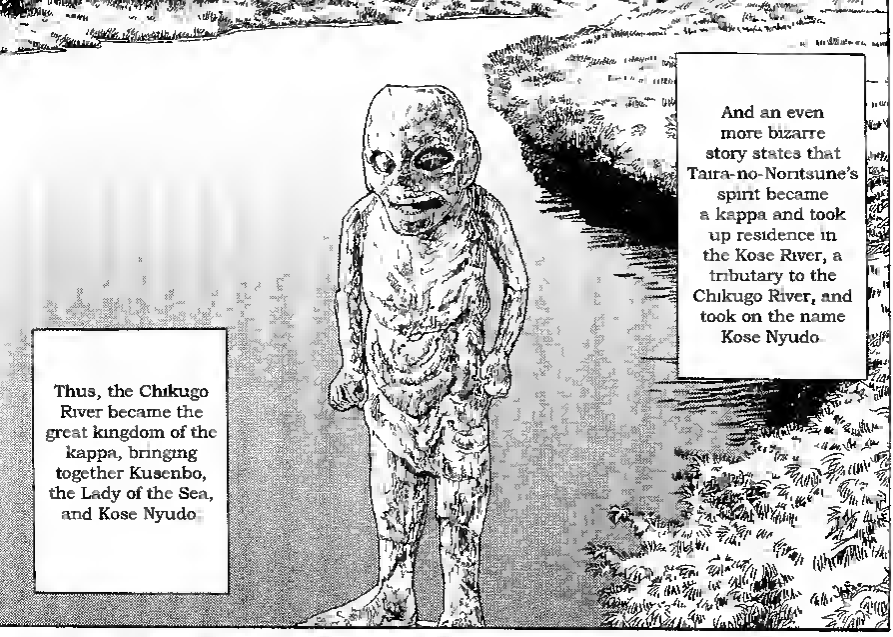

I've only done a little research, not nearly as much as you have! Haha...
You're quite familiar with this.
Having fled to Dannoura, a shrine maiden named Azechi-no-Tsubone Ise made her residence in the area, and established the Water God's Shrine to worship Emperor Antoku's spirit.
Like I mentioned on the phone, there's something I want you to take a look at with your scholarly eye. I'll show you the way.
Dannoura
Kurume Water God's Shrine
I've looked into the legend of the Taira Clan myself. Now that you mention it, there are a number of villages along the Chikugo riverbanks formed by the Taira Clan's remnants.
That's far better than those people that barely even attend their classes in high school yet go on to become university professors.
So it's in a town upstream on the Chikugo River? Never thought you'd end up as an assistant at town hall, Fujiwara.

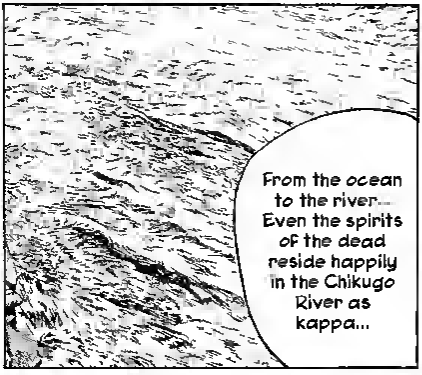
There are other things enshrined at the Water God's Shrine. Look at that train station over there.
Kawappa ...
It's a kawappa. This store sells lots of things related to kawappa, from candles to wooden dolls.

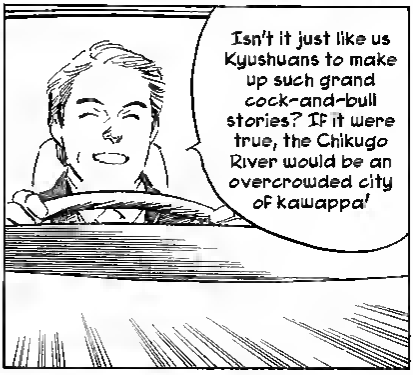

The chief of this nine-thousand-strong army of kappa was called "Kusenbo". After they were driven from the river in Kumamoto, they moved en masse to the Chikugo River.
There's a legend in Kyushu that says that a large school of kappa from the Yellow River in China crossed the ocean and migrated to Japan.

There's an even stranger legend than that...

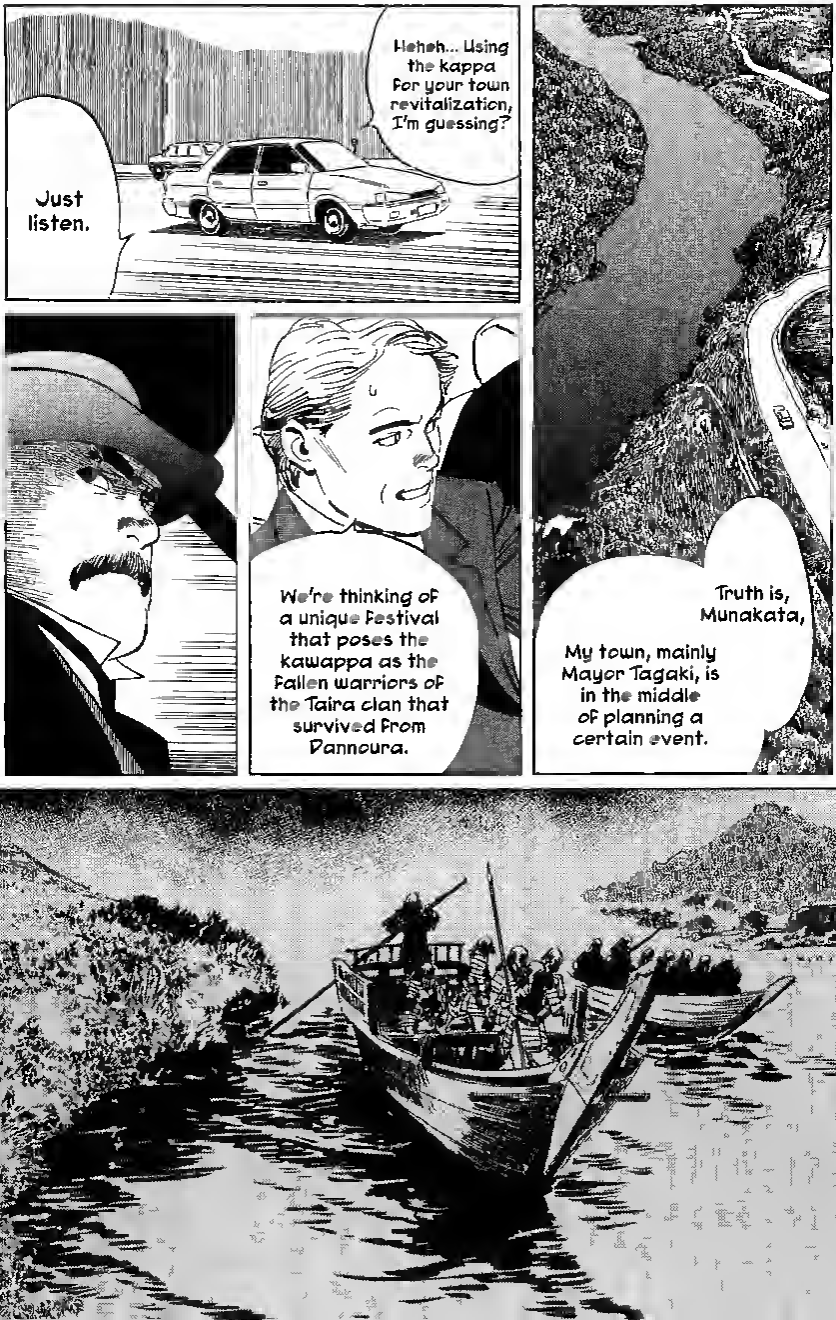

The "Lady of the Sea", enshrined at Ten'eki Shrine in the Moji ward of North Kyushu City, is believed to be a deification of the wife of Taira-no-Noritsune, who drowned at Dannoura.
And this Lady of the Sea is said to be the commander of the kawappa of Kyushu.
The Lady of the Sea is also called "Lady Ama" and some say that she is the same Nu-no-Ama that drowned with Emperor Antoku.


And an even more bizarre story states that Taira-no-Noritsune's spirit became a kappa and took up residence in the Kose River, a tributary to the Chikugo River, and took on the name Kose Nyudo.
Thus, the Chikugo River became the great kingdom of the kappa, bringing together Kusenbo, the Lady of the Sea, and Kose Nyudo.

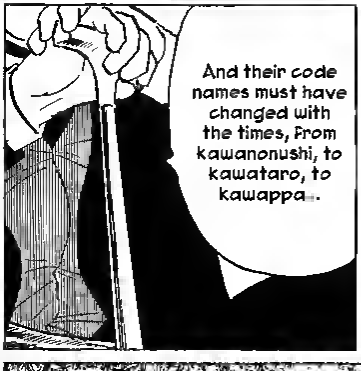

From the ocean to the river... Even the spirits of the dead reside happily in the Chikugo River as kappa...

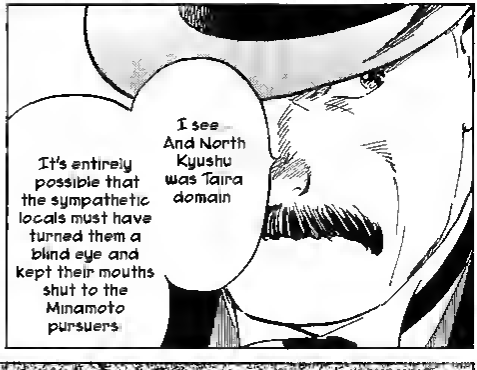

Isn't it just like us Kyushuans to make up such grand cock-and-bull stories? If it were true, the Chikugo River would be an overcrowded city of kawappa!

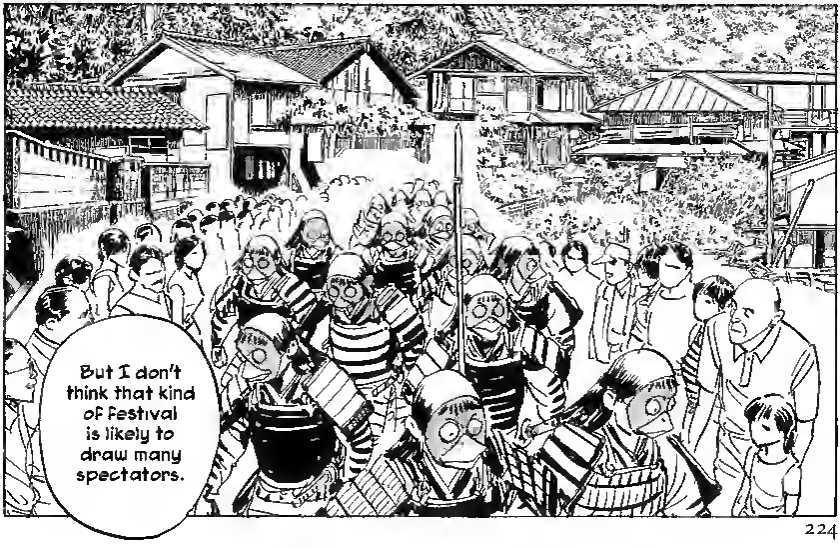
Folk legend it may be, but what is it that tied the Taira clan to the kappa in the first place...?
It's as if they were restoring the glory of the Taira clan...


Just listen.
Hehehh... Using the kappa for your town revitalization, I'm guessing?
Truth is, Munakata,
My town, mainly Mayor Tagaki, is in the middle of planning a certain event.
We're thinking of a unique festival that poses the kawappa as the fallen warriors of the Taira clan that survived from Dannoura.

There are regions of Kyushu where kawappa are called "river people" or "travelers".
They must have called them that in secret when they saw the warriors crossing the mountains and rivers in flight.

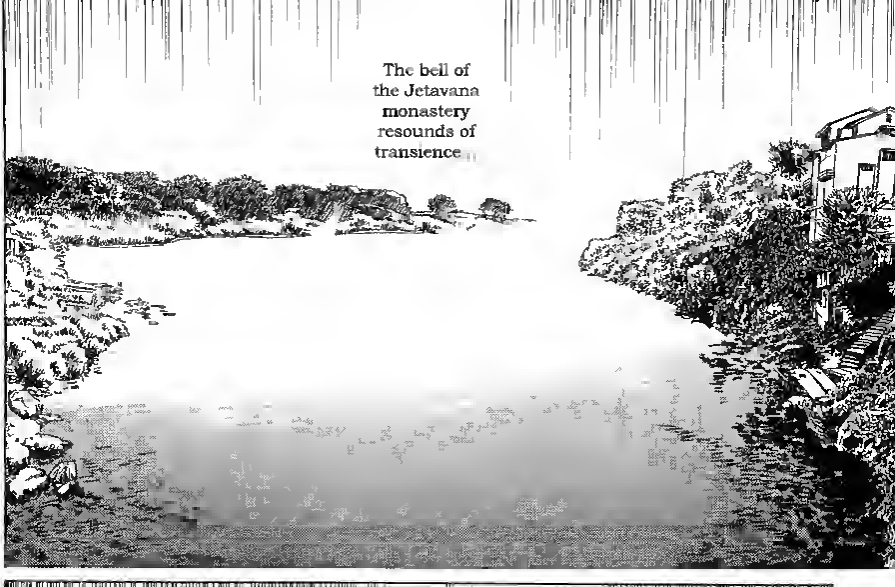

And their code names must have changed with the times, from kawanonushi, to kawataro, to kawappa...

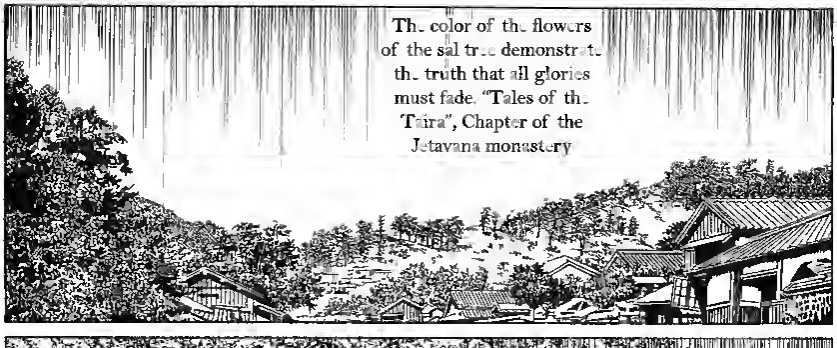

I see... And North Kyushu was Taira domain
It's entirely possible that the sympathetic locals must have turned them a blind eye and kept their mouths shut to the Minamoto pursuers.

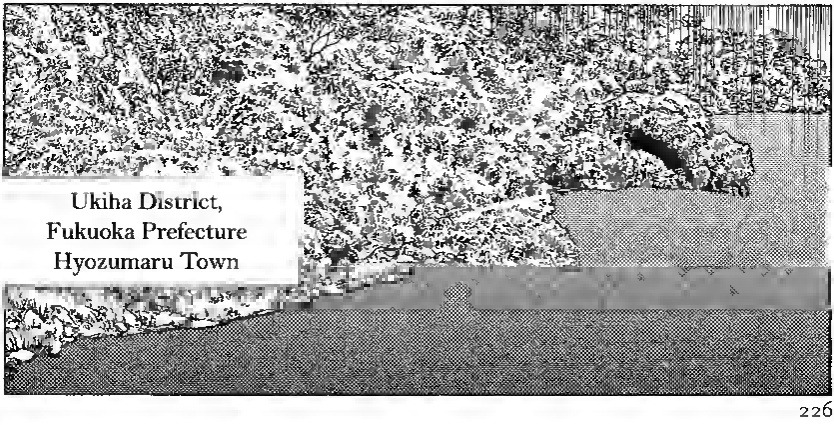

But I don't think that kind of festival is likely to draw many spectators.

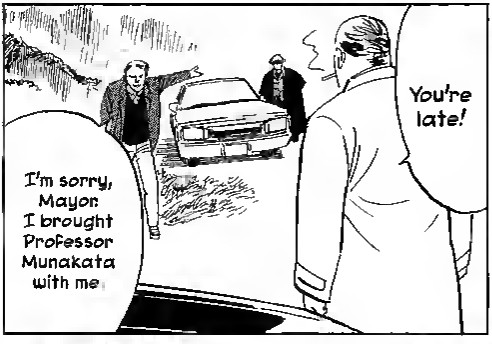
The Gion Ceremony in June or July...
Mayor Tagaki is my childhood friend, so I had to hear out his suggestion.
He says we'll definitely be holding it in the early summer of next year, at around the time of Gion
The Gion Festival in Kyoto is the most well-known, but there is also the Gion Yamagasa Festival of Hakata
It originated with a festival in worship of Gozu-Tenno, the guardian of the Jetavana monastery, as a faith that quelled disease..
On the other hand, some believe that the kappa are the children of the god Gion, and some regions ban bathing in the river at this time of year.
Gion... I see that the link between the kappa and the Taira may be deeper than I had expected..
.....
The grown-ups would always tell us that if we swam, the kawappa would rip out our shirikodama* and we'd die...

*TL NOTE: A MYSTICAL BALL INSIDE THE ANUS THAT IS SOUGHT AFTER BY THE KAPPA

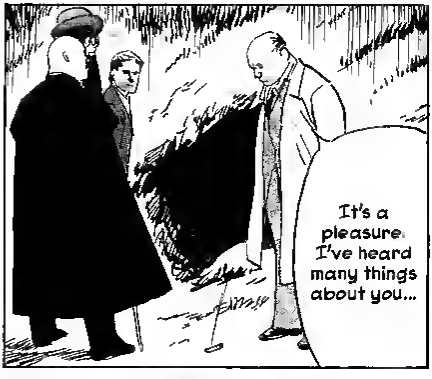

The bell of
the Jetavana
monastery
resounds of
transience...


The color of the flowers
of the sal tree demonstrate
the truth that all glories
must fade. "Tales of the
Taira", Chapter of the
Jetavana monastery


Ukiha District,
Fukuoka Prefecture
Hyozumaru Town

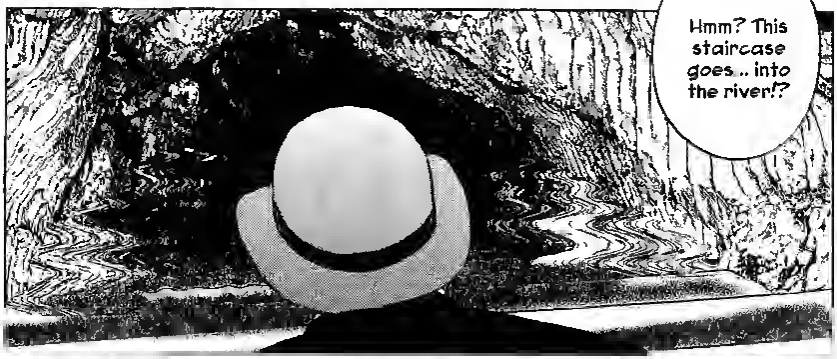

You're late!
I'm sorry, Mayor. I brought Professor Munakata with me.

It's a cave that I had a contractor dig the other day. The air inside seems stale, so I haven't gone down yet.

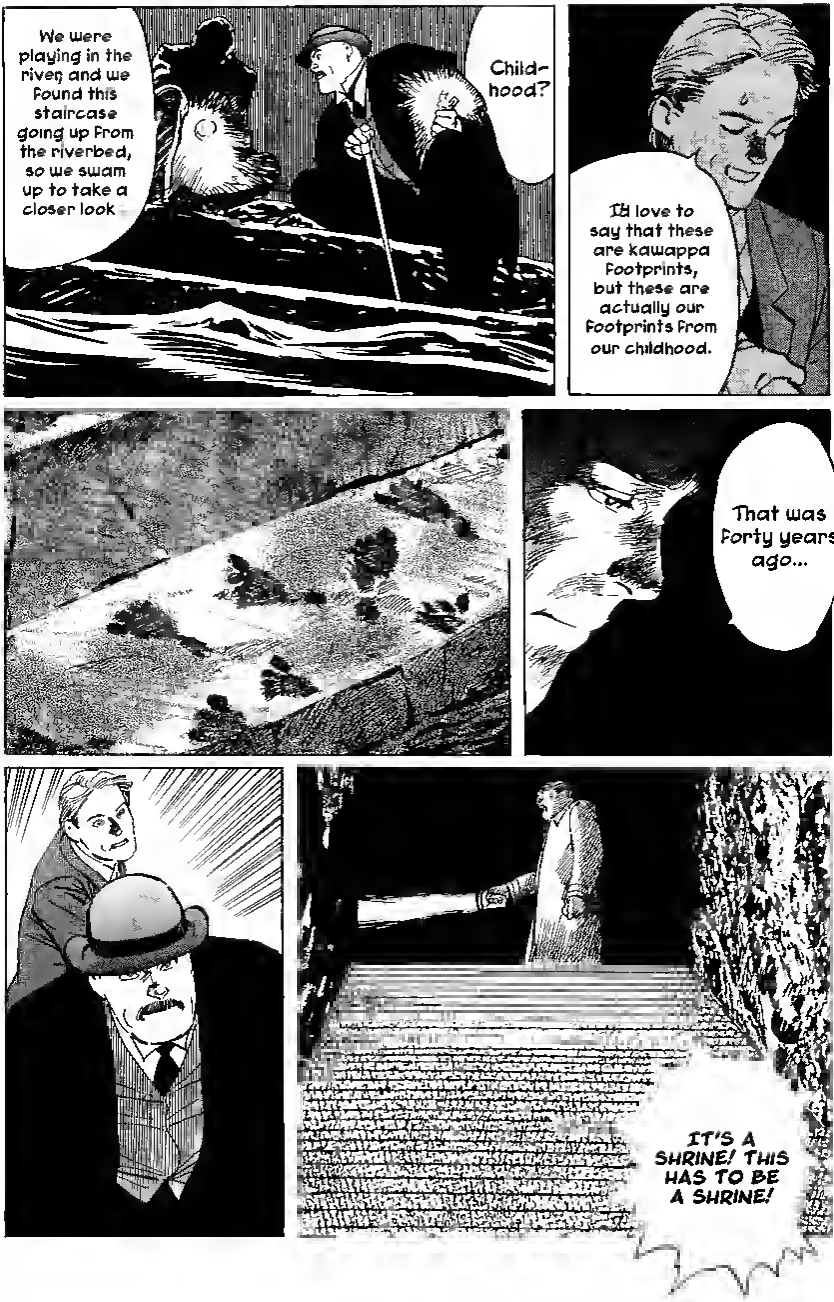

It's a pleasure. I've heard many things about you...

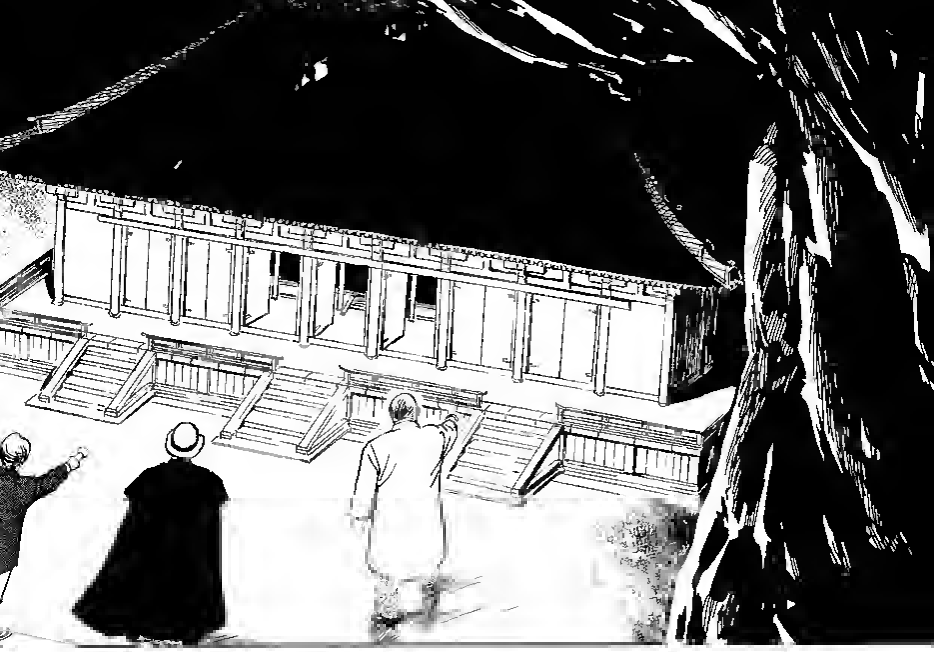
Is this it?

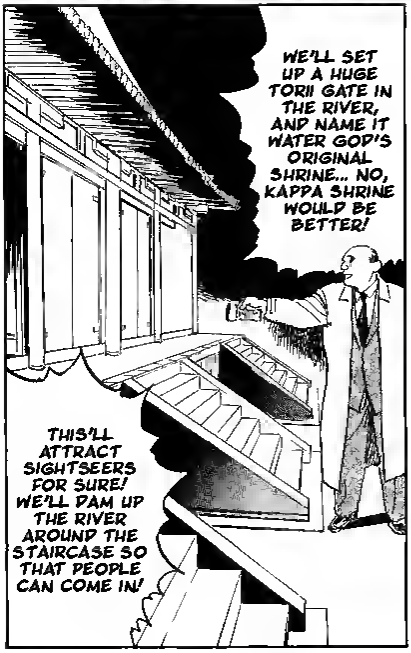
T.. The air's alright! It's slippery, though, so watch your step!

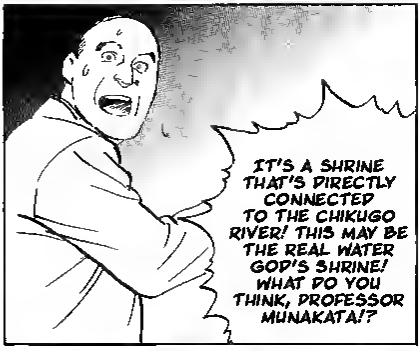

Hmm? This staircase goes... into the river!?

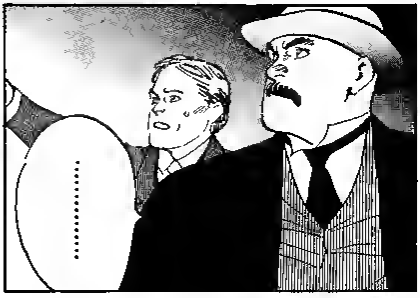
It's set up so that you have to go through the river to reach it. Why would they...


We were playing in the river, and we found this staircase going up from the riverbed, so we swam up to take a closer look
Child-hood?
I'd love to say that these are kawappa footprints, but these are actually our footprints from our childhood.
That was forty years ago...
IT'S A SHRINE! THIS HAS TO BE A SHRINE!

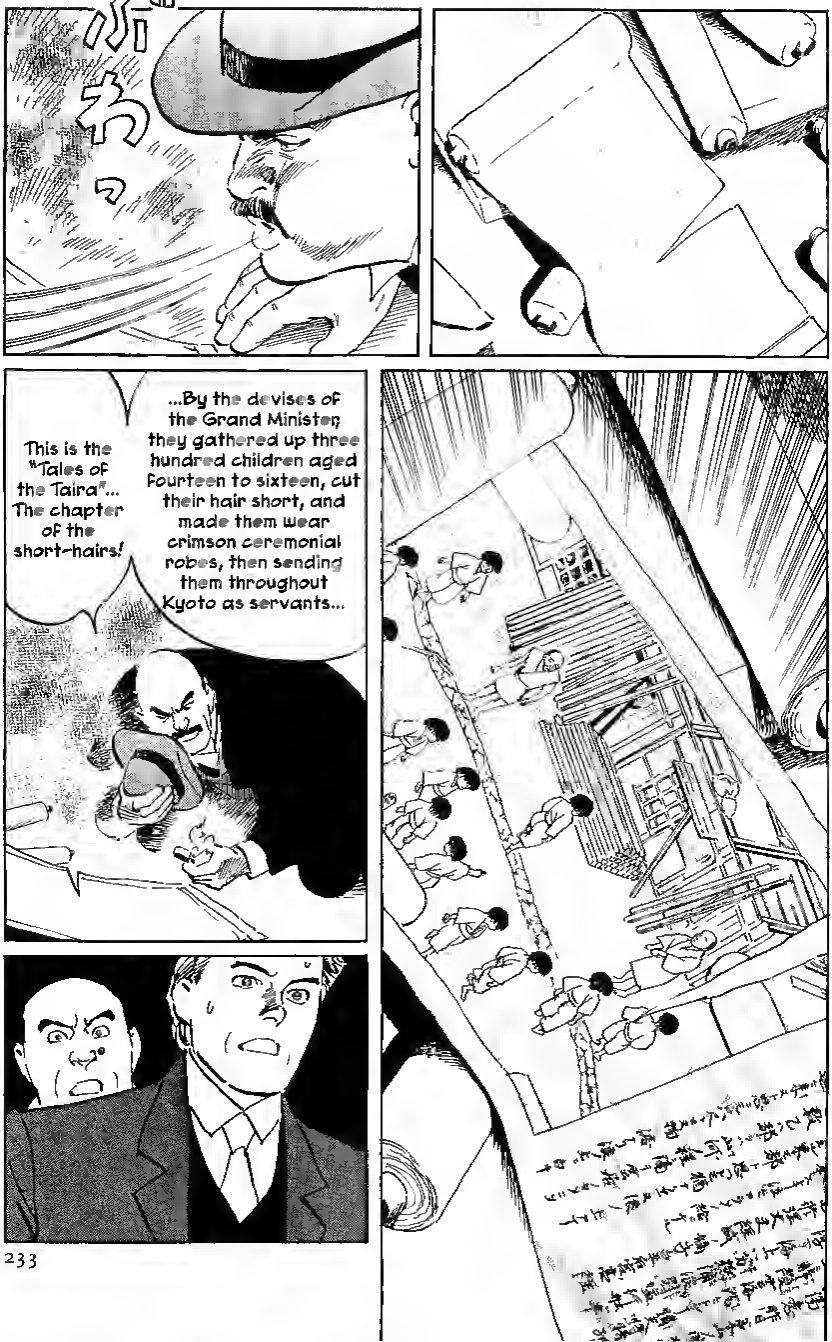


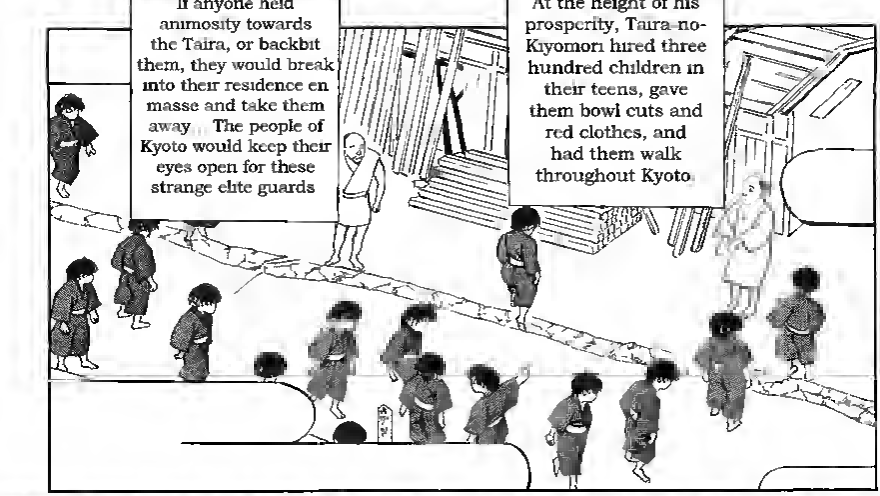

WE'LL SET UP A HUGE TORII GATE IN THE RIVER, AND NAME IT WATER GOD'S ORIGINAL SHRINE... NO, KAPPA SHRINE WOULD BE BETTER!
THIS'LL ATTRACT SIGHTSEERS FOR SURE! WE'LL DAM UP THE RIVER AROUND THE STAIRCASE SO THAT PEOPLE CAN COME IN!

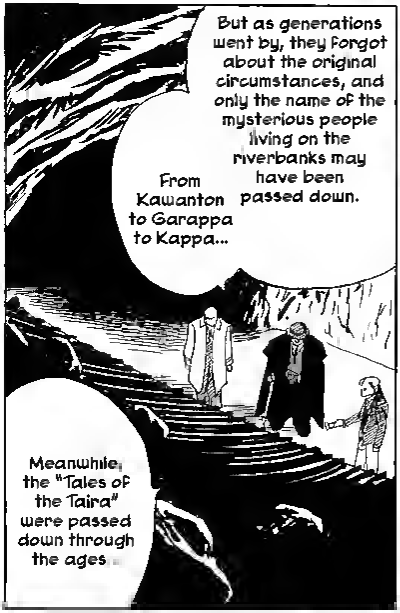

IT'S A SHRINE THAT'S DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO THE CHIKUGO RIVER! THIS MAY BE THE REAL WATER GOD'S SHRINE! WHAT DO YOU THINK, PROFESSOR MUNAKATA!?


.....

I'm sorry, but it doesn't look like a shrine.
This is constructed more like a palace.
Speaking in terms of Kyoto, this would be like the Emperor's residence, the Hall for State Ceremonies, at the end of a large roadway.
Palace?
If the village of the Taira remnants is nearby, then there is a possibility that this was built by people connected to them, like the Water God's Shrine in Kurume.


ふぅ
This is the "Tales of the Taira"... The chapter of the short-hairs!
...By the devises of the Grand Minister, they gathered up three hundred children aged fourteen to sixteen, cut their hair short, and made them wear crimson ceremonial robes, then sending them throughout Kyoto as servants...


If anyone held animosity towards the Taira, or backbit them, they would break into their residence en masse and take them away. The people of Kyoto would keep their eyes open for these strange elite guards
At the height of his prosperity, Taira-no-Kiyomori hired three hundred children in their teens, gave them bowl cuts and red clothes, and had them walk throughout Kyoto.

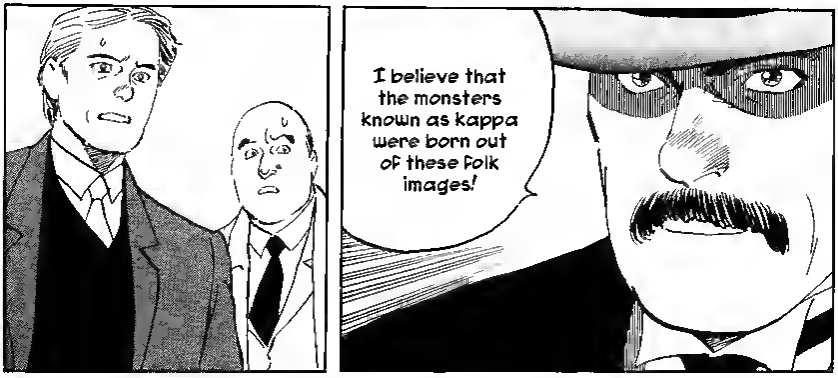

But as generations went by, they forgot about the original circumstances, and only the name of the mysterious people living on the riverbanks may have been passed down.
From Kawanton to Garappa to Kappa...
Meanwhile, the "Tales of the Taira" were passed down through the ages...

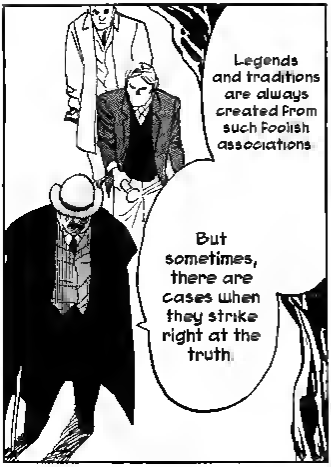
Back to our story, the defeated Taira were called by strange names such as River People or Travelers...

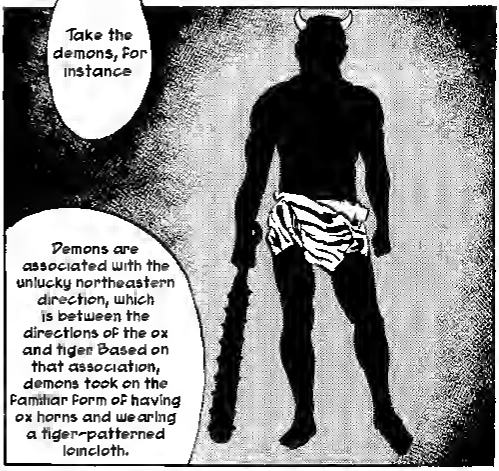
I believe that the influence of these tales caused the Taira Clan to be associated with two distinct images.
Two images?
The first is water!
For that reason, Taira-no-Kiyomori built Itsukushima Shrine on the ocean to worship the sea god, and made the sea god the patron of their clan.
The Taira were a clan spread out across the waters, from the Seto Inland Sea to Kyushu. They prospered by trade and had a powerful navy.
And the second is children!

A number of children are depicted in the Tales of the Taira, most notably the short-hairs.
Even Rokudai Gozen, the final heir of the Taira Clan, found the sight of the children that were victimized by the rise and fall of their clan to be pitiful to no end.

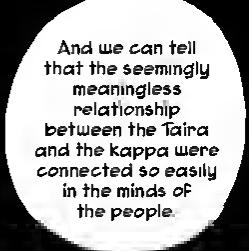
And "water" and "children" are fused most powerfully in the tragedy of Emperor Antoku...!


I believe that the monsters known as kappa were born out of these folk images!


Legends and traditions are always created from such foolish associations.
But sometimes, there are cases when they strike right at the truth.


Take the demons, for instance
Demons are associated with the unlucky northeastern direction, which is between the directions of the ox and tiger. Based on that association, demons took on the familiar form of having ox horns and wearing a tiger-patterned loincloth.

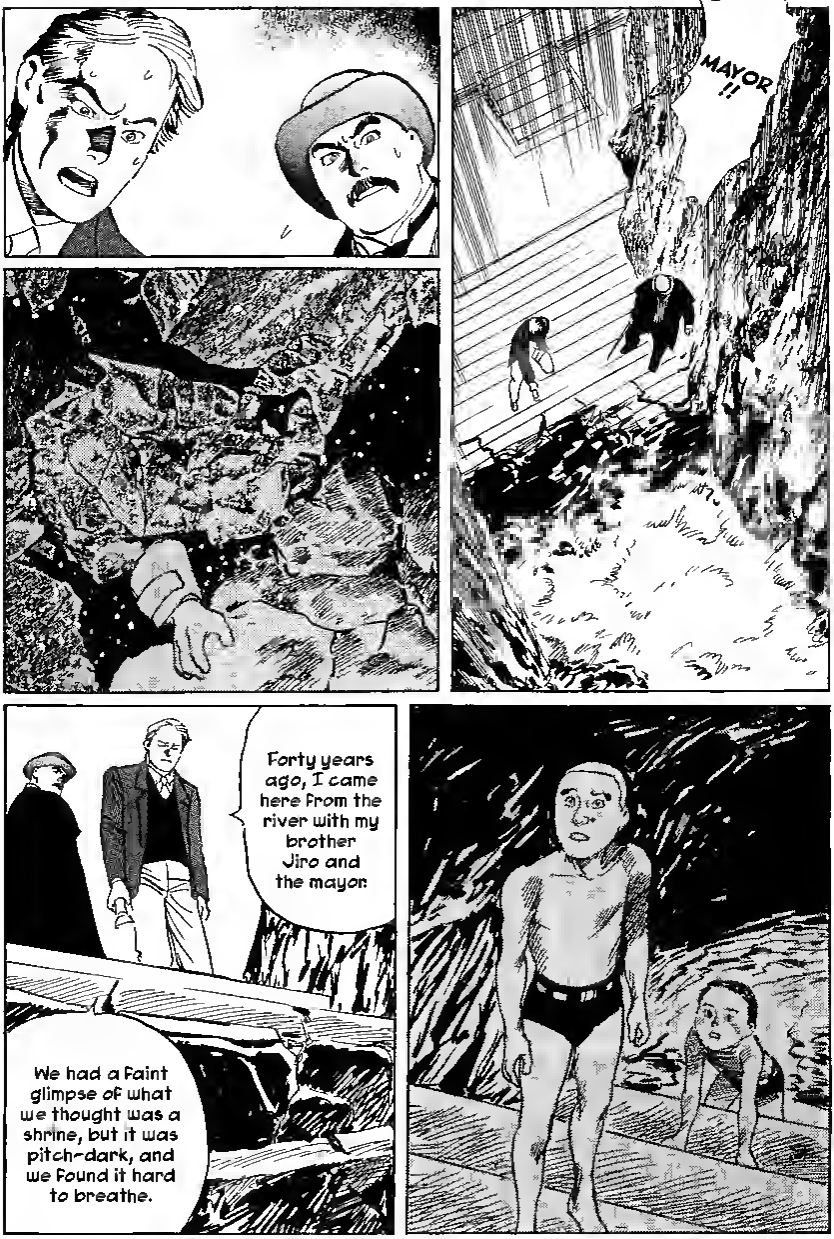
Because Taira-no-Kiyomori is said to be the son of the Lady Gion.
The bizarre legend that Taira-no-Kiyomori became a kappa must have come later, out of an association with the belief that the kappa are the children of Gion.


And we can tell that the seemingly meaningless relationship between the Taira and the kappa were connected so easily in the minds of the people.

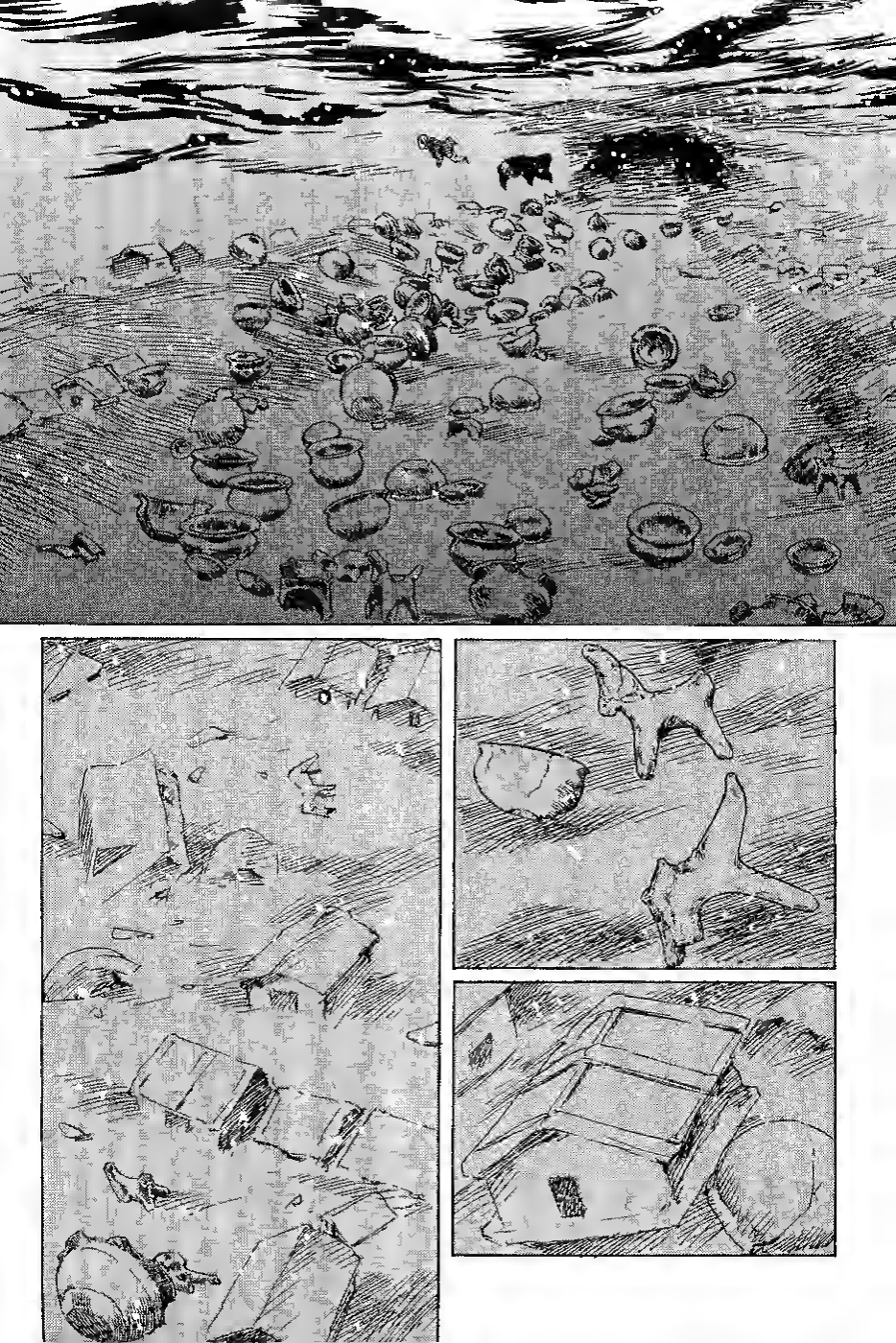
They believed that those who died in the rivers or lakes were killed by a monster, and allotted them the strange names of gawappa or kappa.
"Water and children" became "child of water"...
They were the size of a child, with a bowl-cut, also known as a "kappa cut"...
And their appearance came from a composite of images connected to the Taira.
And the archetype of the kappa that most people are familiar with began in the Edo period.
But this palace connected to the riverbed .. Why would the defeated Taira build this?

WATCH OUT! THIS CHAMBER HAS BEEN AIRTIGHT FOR CENTURIES, BUT THE AIR FROM THE TUNNEL IS CAUSING IT TO COLLAPSE!
WAAUGH !?

THE TUNNEL IS SINKING! THE WATER'S A HORRIFYING PLACE!
THE RAIN MUST HAVE FLOODED THE RIVER!
WAA AAAA UGH!


MAYOR !!
Forty years ago, I came here from the river with my brother Jiro and the mayor.
We had a faint glimpse of what we thought was a shrine, but it was pitch-dark, and we found it hard to breathe.

I don't know whether it was noxious gases or asphyxiation, we went back to the river in a panic, but we couldn't swim as well as we thought we could.
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE WE HAVE ANY TIME TO WASTE, FUJIMURA!



...There was something like a path leading from the stone staircase, almost like it was a city street..
It's the city for the dead children to live in...
An under-water city?

...Before long, the Lady Nii embraced him and comforted him, saying,
"There is a city underneath the waves." Thus, they plunged into the depths.
"Tales of the Taira", Chapter of the Former Emperor's Drowning
The Emperor was eight years old this year, yet he was very mature for his age, his features were beautiful, and his surroundings shone brightly...
"O nun, I shall accompany thee wherever thou may go."

File 29: City of the Water God – END

❖おことわり❖

この作品はフィクションです。
実在の人物・団体・事件などには一切関係ありません。
また、雑誌掲載時の時代を背景に描かれていますので、
現在の国名、単位表記と異なる表現がありますが、
あえてそのままとしました。ご了承ください。

❖初出単行本❖

一九九九年四月二十日　小社より刊行

解説

欠けた土器の隙間

加門七海
作家

ついつい、いつもの軽はずみで原稿の依頼を受けたものの、何だか先生の著作に生徒が解説を書くようで、甚だ心許ない感じだ。

読者の誰より、星野先生御自身が拙稿に目を通されることを思うと、二の足、三の足を踏んでしまう。しかし、引き受けてしまったからには約束は果たさねばならない。願わくば、先生から「不可」を喰らいませんように……。

この先生・生徒というスタンスは、別に謙遜で言うわけではない。

本文庫中「菊理媛（くくりひめ）は何を告げたか」て、宗像教授はこう言っている。

尼僧・連珠（れんじゅ）から、なにゆえ白山信仰に興味を持ったかと尋ねられ、

「なに　女子学生から質問されましてね……」「菊理媛がイザナギに何かを言ったことになっているが　どんな言葉だったと思うか――？」――「早いとこ答を出さないと　面目丸つぶれというわけです」

星野先生（ともかく、こう呼ばせていただく）自身がのちに明かしているとおり、この質問をした女子学生とは私のことだ。以前、雑誌でインタビューをさせていただいたとき、私が投げた質問がまさに「菊理媛は何を告げたか」だったのだ。

ご存じの方もいるかも知れないが、私もまた、記紀神話や歴史上のミステリーに興味を持っている。インタビュー当時、菊理媛にハマッていた私は不躾なのを承知の上で、先生にそれを尋ねたのである。当座、答えは頂けなかった。そしてのち、先生は本作品を発表なさった。この作品を読んだとき、私は赤面すると同時に、それこそ拙い質問に、このような形でお答えくださった星野先生の真心と真摯さに打たれたものだった（もちろん、とうの立った女性を、学生などという若い女性にたとえてくれたのも嬉しかったが）。

星野先生＝宗像教授は、なんて懐の広い人なんだろう……。

感激と同時に、一ファンとしてのボルテージが上がったことは言うまでもない。

今更、語るまでもないが、デビュー以前から、私は星野作品の大ファンだった。最初に出合ったのは『妖女伝説』――今から二十年以上前の作品だ。

当時、学生だった私は、行きつけの本屋でこの単行本に出合った。まず、表紙の美女に目を奪われ、そのまま立ち読みを始めて、そして、あっという間に星野ワールドの虜になってしまったのだ。特に「月夢」を読んだときには、総毛立つような衝撃と感動に襲われたのを憶えている。嘘ではない証拠に、その本屋のどこの書架に『妖女伝説』が置いてあ

り、当日、雨が降っていたことまで、今でも鮮明に思い出せる。

一旦、私はすべてを読み終え、本を抱いてレジに向かった。そして、以来、星野之宣という人の作品にのめり込んでいったのだ。

私が今の職に就き、歴史の謎解きや伝奇小説モドキの作品を記すのも、多分に星野先生の影響があると断言してもいいだろう。そういう現実的な意味においても、星野先生は確かに、私の「先生」なのである。

本シリーズ『宗像教授伝奇考』はもちろん第一級のエンターテイメントであり、民俗学や考古学の学術論文とは異なっている。しかし、話はすべて綿密に調べられたのちに組み立てられたものであり、ただの妄想と異なることは、ちょっと歴史をかじった人なら誰もが否とは言わないだろう。いや、私を含めた半端な歴史好きなどは足許にも及ばないほど、先生は研究熱心だ。

私は本シリーズを読むたびに、行き届いた下調べに圧倒されると共に、その上で物語を構築する技量に舌を巻いてしまう。そこに作画のリアルさが相乗効果となって加わって、語られる物語がまるで真実であるような錯覚に陥ってしまうのだ。

いや。錯覚、と言っては語弊がある。作品中には星野先生御自身、自説に確信を持ってらっしゃるのではないかと思われるものが、少なからずあるからだ。加えて、私自身、それらの作品に、学術書では決して語られることのない〝事実〟の影を見てしまう。

無論、すべてを肯定すれば、フィクションがわからぬ馬鹿となろう。だが、私は逆に、先生の作品すべてを、ただのフィクションと置いてしまうことには異を唱えたい。

本書中、圧倒的な迫真性を誇る「西遊将門伝」の中、先生は宗像教授の口を借りてこう述べている。

「――学問とは事実を積み重ねた先に結論を見出すものだ」「先に思いつきのような結論があって　それを証明していこうとするのは学問的な態度ではない」

この意見を一般論として提示しつつも、宗像教授の言動・星野ワールドは、それを否定する側に回っている。この台詞はまさに、星野ワールドと相反する世界の住人の呟きであると言って良い。つまり、先生はこの公式に背を向けるため、敢えて一般論を宗像教授に語らせたのではないかと推測するのだ。

真実は、学問では計りきれないところにある、と……。

歴史的・考古学的検証は、警察の検証とよく似ている。即ち物的証拠や目撃者（古文書）等の裏付けがあって初めて、その考証が成立し、世に問える論文となるからだ。

しかし証拠というのは逆に「証拠がある」からこその間違いを引き起こしてしまうこともある。殊に考古学的な遺物に関しては、後代の人間が持つ〝常識〟が、往々にして真実に至る道程を阻害しているように思われる。

博物館などで、欠けた土器の空白部分を石膏などを用い〝想像〟で補っているのを見か

けたことがあるだろう。これは「この時代の土器の一般傾向はこうだから」という知識の積み重ねの結果である。が、百パーセントそうだったという確信は、実はどこにも存在しないのだ。もしかしたら、欠けた部分がとんでもない形になっていた可能性もある。説明板に記されている使用法もまた、然りである。

本シリーズの第二集「女たちの神」で取り上げられていた、三内丸山遺跡の巨木柱の跡などは好い例だろう。

現在、復元されている建物の形は「そうであろう」という推論の結果だ。実際、あの建物の形に定まるまで、巨木柱の用途の考察、上部の建物の形には複数の案が提出されていた。なにせ、残っていたのは柱跡だけなのだから、上にあった（と推定される）建物の形は誰にもわかるわけがない。その中で一番、専門家達の支持を得て、かつ、現代の私達の感性で納得できるものとして作られたのが、現在の建造物なのだ。つまり、あの建物は飽くまで「かも知れない」という、一例に過ぎないものだということだ。

しかし、人というのは愚かなもので、一度形が定まってしまうと、それが事実であるように思い込み始める。実際、観光で現地を訪れる人の大半は、あの建物こそが当時のままだと考えているに違いない。

復元の功罪は多々あるが、私はそういう刷り込みこそが、一番恐ろしいと考える。最悪の場合、それは想像力の剝奪になってしまうからだ。

それに待ったをかけるのが、星野先生＝宗像教授というヒーローだ。宗像教授の出合う事件はすべて、その剝奪に真っ向から立ち向かう。そして欠けた土器の部分を欠けたままに見て、新たな提案を突きつけてくる。

「今の常識ではこうだが、それは納得できる一例というだけであり、真実とは別かもしれないぞ」

なにせ、古代人の感性や技術力など、タイムマシンでもない限り、誰にもわからない。出雲大社の巨大神殿すら、柱跡が発掘されるまで（文書に残っているにも拘らず）誰も確信は持てなかったのだ。

事実はすべて、時という闇の彼方にある。ゆえ、学者達が想像で土器を繋いでいいのなら、我々が我々の想像で土器を彩っても構うまい。

星野先生はその実践者の首魁である。そして星野流で見事に彩られた歴史が即ち、平将門と天海僧正・『西遊記』の関わりであり、菊理媛と屈葬の関係であり、河童と平家の物語なのだ。

これら各作品について語るには、あまりに私の情熱と紙数が合わないので割愛したい。ただ、星野之宣という作家が幻視し、あるいは確信した、未知なる土器の形・用法を存分に堪能して欲しい——切に望む次第である。

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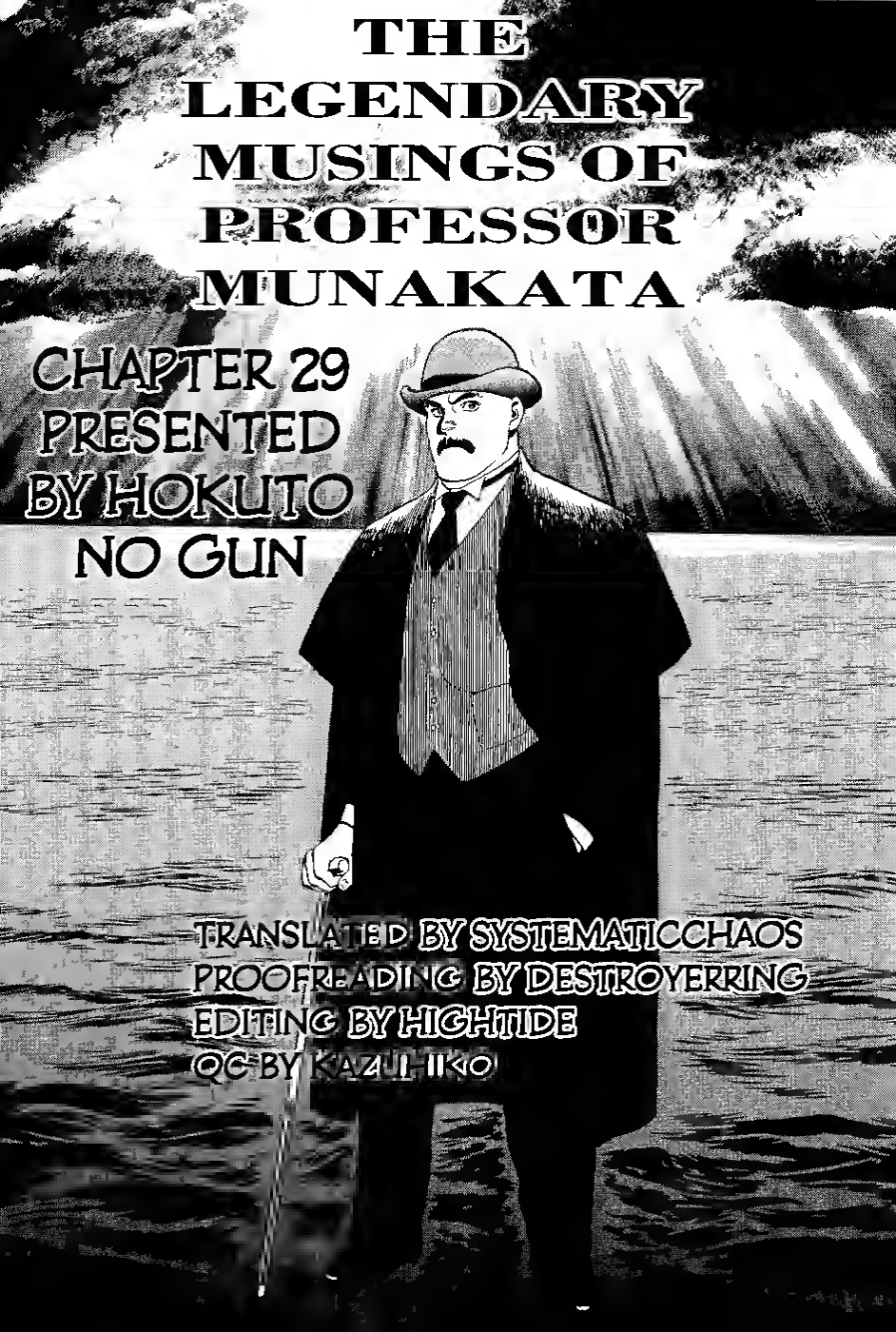
THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 29

PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN



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